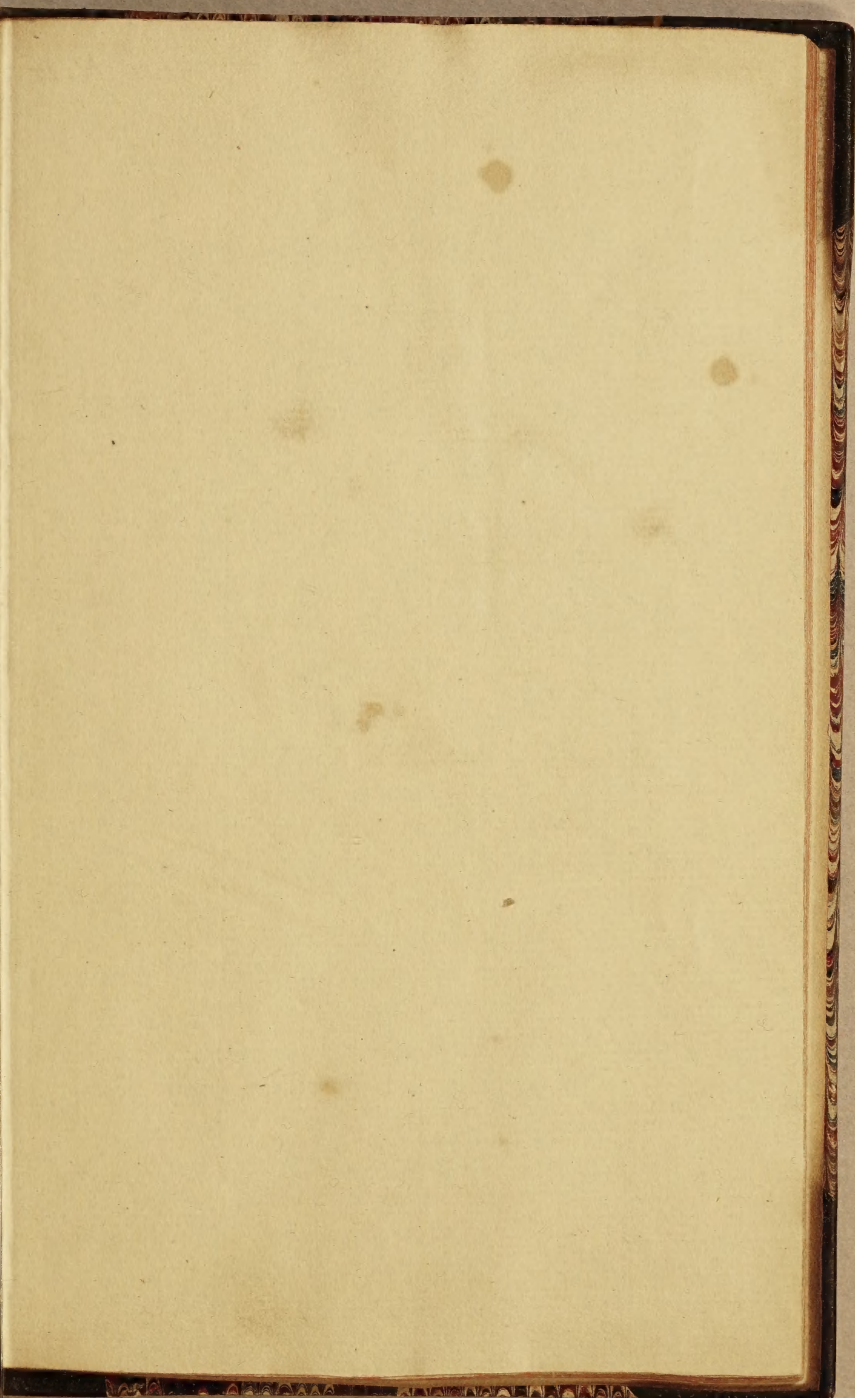




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John Carter Brown.



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Book on Fish

Rigby
Stewart
Brodrick

THE
Groans of JAMAICA,

Express'd in a

LETTER

FROM A

GENTLEMAN Residing there,

TO HIS

FRIEND in LONDON;

CONTAINING

A clear Detection, and most convincing
Narrative

OF

Some of the crying Grievances, and fraudulent
Oppressions, which gave the first Rise to the
present growing Discontents, Divisions, and
Animosities, among the Inhabitants of that
Island:

AS ALSO

Particular Characters of the chief Authors and Pro-
moters of these Distractions.

Prov. 27. 5. *Open rebuke is better than secret Love.*

Chap. 28. 4. *They that forsake the Law, praise the Wicked; But
they that keep the Law contend with them.*

Chap. 22. 10. *Cast out the Scornor, and Contention shall go out;
Yea, Strife and Reproach shall cease.*

LONDON:

Printed in the Year, 1714.

T H E
 Publisher's P R E F A C E to the Reader.

HAppening to cast my eyes, some Time since, on a late Collection of Familiar Letters, written by some Gentlemen in *Jamaica*, to their several Friends in *London*, touching the then present State and Administration of the Government of that Island, and printed Anno 1713. and judging that the Bulk thereof may have deterred several Persons, to whose Hands the same may have come, from giving themselves the Trouble of reading and deliberately considering the whole Contents of that Collection; I cul'd out, from among all the other Letters, that one whereof the following is a true Copy; as comprehending, in my Opinion, much more variety of useful Matter, than any one of all the rest. And hoping that such Persons as now have, or hereafter may have it in their Power, to enquire into, and redress all, or any of the Grievances therein set forth, may not grudge the Time they'll bestow on reading the following Sheets, I thought it might possibly be of some use to the Publick, to have it reprinted apart, in the manner you now see the same.

The Author (whoever he be) seems to have been not only at abundance of pains, in procuring particular Information, and making himself fully Master of the several Matters of Fact mention'd in this Letter, but has also so very clearly recited them, and express'd his own Thoughts and Animadversions thereon, and supported the same with such circumstantiated Evidence, and undoubted Authorities, that I reckon it next to an impossibility, for any intelligent and unbiass'd Person to read the whole deliberately, once all over, without being thoroughly convinced of the manifest and clear Truth thereof; and consequently of the many gross Abuses imposed on the Queen and Her Ministry here, as well as on Her Majesty's Subjects of *Jamaica*, by a Trinumvirate of vile, profane, mercenary, and ignominious Upstarts, with the implicate Concurrence and Suffrage of a certain Tool, they have got into their Hands.

Some Readers may possibly object, That the Stile of the following Letter is too serious and prolix; that the making use of such scriptural Texts, and Latin Quotations, as are, here and

The Publisher's P R E F A C E to the Reader. iii

and there, interspersed in it, favours too much of Pedantry ; and that, in some Places, the thread of the Narrative seems to be interrupted, with needless Digressions.

The Truth is, I had once some Thoughts of having made an Abridgment of this Letter, so as to have reduced the chief Heads thereof, into a much narrower Compass: But then I considered that such an Abridgment would have quite alter'd the Quality thereof, and be much the same as fathering another Man's Child: Moreover, I considered that no such clear view can be given, to Persons here, of Affairs transacted at so great a distance, as when they are illustrated with all the material Circumstances attending them: And then, as the subject Matter is, of it self, very grievous and afflicting, in many respects; so 'tis no wonder if the Consideration thereof may have put the Writer in a more serious Mood than ordinary, at the Time: Nay, who knows but that possibly he may also have been a Sharer in some of those Afflictions, occasion'd by the fraudulent and perjurious Practices complain'd of, in this Letter: And if so, he must, of course, have been still the more affected therewith: And therefore, in expostulating about the base and horrid unworthiness of some of the Facts therein mentioned, he could not, in a more pathetick and forcible manner, have inculcated a true and feeling Sense thereof, into the mind of his Correspondent, than by appealing to the sacred Oracles, and some approved moral Authors, for a Judgment in such Cases: And such a scriptural strain seems still the more natural, and less liable to Exception, if what I have heard whispered be true; that a certain Clergyman of that Island (who, by the Duty of his Function, may probably have thought himself obliged to *Rebuke, Reprove, and Exhort, in Season and out of Season*) wrote it; tho', as he is now stated, he may not think it convenient to have his Name publicly known, at least while he remains there; because indeed the doing any good Office of that nature, upon the Point of Opinion, Intelligence, Brains, or Conscience, where such a Wolfish Humor prevails, as now reigns in *Jamaica*, is commonly considered as a sort of *Scandalum Magnatum*; and therefore too frequently exposeth one to the Envy, Hatred, Malice and Revenge of such potent Calumniators, as may likewise be his Judges, even in their own Cause.

Then, as to such Digressions as are to be met with, in the following Letter, tho' they may, at first view, seem to be somewhat Foreign to the chief Design, and subject-Matter thereof; yet, upon a more serious Review, they'll appear to be strong supplemental Arguments, for supporting the verity of such ge-

neral Characters as are given of the several Persons therein named : And as to the supposed Charge of Pedantry, I take it for granted, that none but those who do not understand Latin, will find much fault with using apposite Latin Phrases, on proper Occasions ; and even such Persons will, upon perusal, find, if they slip over all the Latin Phrases us'd here, the Sense and Coherence will still remain clear enough, without them.

I must own, it has, oftner than once, been the Subject of my Admiration, as well as Contemplation, how it should come to pass, that in all the Revolutions of State, and Changes of the Ministry, which have happened here, these Sixty Years past, and upwards, ever since the happy Restoration of King *Charles II.* to great an Accession to the Power, Riches and Glory of this Kingdom, as are undoubtedly the several Colonies which compose the *British Empire in America*, should (even in the most noted Periods of that Time, for either Peace or War) lye still so much neglected, under such a precarious Government and greivous Administration, as they have, for the most part, labour'd under, both before and since the late signal Revolution ; tho' of late Years (as far as I can learn) still worse and worse.

'Tis true, the present Ministry have had their Heads so much imployed about the weightiest Affairs of State, at home, and in settling the general Peace of *Europe* ; that it may, very justly, be supposed, they have not had Time enough, as yet, to look so far Abroad, as to have taken immediate Cognizance of the several Constitutions, present Circumstances, and particular Grievances of the *British West-India Plantations*. But, 'tis hoped that, in due Time, these may likewise fall under their serious Consideration.

I know some designing and wicked People have been, and still are, at no small Pains to inculcate into the Minds of all Persons in Authority, whom they have the Opportunity of conversing or corresponding with, very mean Notions and Sentiments of the Births, Education, Manners, Principles, and other Qualities of the Inhabitants of those Plantations ; and, under such disadvantageous Characters, their several Oppressors have, from Time to Time, endeavour'd to misrepresent them here, as a turbulent, factious, and uneasie People, never to be pleased, under any Government whatsoever.

To which it may very justly be replied, That, upon an impartial Examination and Tryal, it would manifestly appear, that all the Contentions and Animosities, which, at any time, happen between the Governour and Inhabitants of
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any of the *West-India* Plantations, have (generally speaking, and particularly as to *Jamaica*) had their first Rise, from some grievous and intolerable Acts of Oppression, in the Administration: And therefore 'tis not to be much wonder'd at, if such should produce some Repinings, Heart-burnings and Discontents, among a People otherways very peaceably disposed; when the wisest of Men found from his own Experience, and left it to us, as a certain Aphorism, recorded in Scripture, that *Oppression maketh even a wise Man mad.*

It cannot be denied, but that, in peopling those Plantations, many Persons of obscure Births and very indifferent Characters went, or were, from time to time, sent and transported thither, as Occasion required: But 'tis as true, that some thousands of Persons of very creditable Families, good Education, and loyal Principles, went thither likewise; some through the Narrowness of their Circumstances; some to avoid the Miseries of the Civil War at home; and others to improve such paternal or acquired Fortunes and Estates, as they thought convenient to carry along with them, at the time.

The present Inhabitants are generally Her Majesty's natural born Subjects, Natives either of *England*, *Scotland*, or *Ireland*, or born of such, in the Plantations: Many of them are Gentlemen of very liberal Education, some even at Universities: And such having, by their own, or their Forefathers Industry, acquired the Property and Possession of very considerable Plantations and Estates, and being desirous and willing to enjoy the same comfortably, and to live peaceably, as good and dutiful Subjects, cannot but grudge extremely to find, that (as particularly in *Jamaica*) profound Ignorance, accompanied with vast Impudence in some, a stupid, blind, indolent and implicate Acquiescence in others, and a crafty, active, knavish Genius, blended with Lewdness, Atheism and Irreligion in a third sort; and all varnished over, with a servile, fawning seeming Obsequiousness, should be the Chief, if not the only, recommending Qualities, to entitle even the worst of Men, tho' sprung up as suddenly, in one Night's time, as Mushrooms out of a Dung-hill, to a Go——r's Favour; while, at the same time, Men of Virtue, Merit and Capacity, are not only discouraged, insulted, and oppressed, but also revil'd, belied and ridicul'd, to an intolerable Degree, with Buffoonry, Impudence and Nonsense; to the great Encouragement of Vice and Immorality, in those Parts.

Could we reasonably suppose, and be assured of a constant Succession of wise, judicious, just, good and pious Prin-

ces on the Throne, like Her present Majesty; and of such like Governors, in all Provinces and far distant Plantations, and that these again would, in their Choice of all subordinate Judges, Magistrates and other Officers, regulate themselves by the most apparent Proofs of the Vertue, Merit and Capacity of the several Candidates, for Offices of Trust and Profit; I believe all good Men would join with me in Opinion, That, of all the several Forms of Government on Earth, an unlimited absolute Government would undoubtedly be the best, on many Accounts; but the Experience the World has had of the lamentable Weakness of some Princes and Rulers, of all Degrees; and of the extravagant Passions and insatiable Avarice, Ambition, Lust, and Revenge of some others; has so fully demonstrated the Vanity and Folly of such a fruitless and chimerical Supposition, that the Wisdom of our Ancestors found it necessary to tie up even the best of our Princes, as well as the bad, by good and wholesome Laws.

The Consideration whereof makes it still so much more the Subject of my Wonder; that a Governor of any Colony of Her Majesty's Free-born Subjects, in the *West-Indies*, so far distant from the Seat of Redress, either by Appeals, or otherwise, should be vested with a Power to govern, in a more absolute and unlimited manner there, than even the Queen her self can, according to Law, or ever did attempt to exercise in *Great Britain*.

The Governor of *Jamaica* (*c. g.*) is not only CAPTAIN GENERAL, and Commander in Chief of that Island, and other the Territories thereunto belonging, and likewise CHANCELLOR, and Vice-Admiral thereof; but has also the sole Power of nominating, appointing, continuing, turning out, and putting in again, at Pleasure, as often and whensoever he will, all and every one of the Judges of all the other Courts of Judicature, throughout the said Island; and likewise the Power of calling, continuing, adjourning, proroguing, dissolving, and issuing new Writs, for succeeding Assemblies, at Pleasure, without any manner of Limitation, as to time or otherways: by Means whereof, the Free-holders have been frequently plagued, harassed and disappointed, in their own private Affairs, by Elections and long Sessions, to little good Purpose, at times very unseasonable for the Planting-Interest; and as frequently prorogued or dissolved again, whenever they could not be prevail'd upon, to comply implicitly with the arbitrary Dictates, and injurious Measures of some few designing Persons, whose constant Plot is to enrich themselves, by enslaving the Inhabitants.

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The Governor is likewise, in effect (tho' not nominally) BISHOP of *Jamaica*: For, he's vested with the sole Power of nominating, appointing, and collating Ministers in all and every one of the Parishes of that Island; (which are 17 in Number) has also the granting of all Letters of Administration, all Probates of Wills and Testaments, all Licences for Marriages, and Licences for permitting School-Masters to teach; the naming and appointing Guardians for absent Orphans: And, in short, is sole Judge of all Matters relating to the Consistorial or Ecclesiastick Law there:

Now, how such an universal Knowledge, Experience and Judgment, both of Men and Things, as seems necessary to accomplish any Man, for the Discharge of so universal and unlimited a Trust, in so many different Capacities as aforesaid, should (without immediate Inspiration) be acquired, by a Person who was never, any way, noted for the Brightness of his natural Parts, and who had not the Advantage of any other Education, but what he had between the Stem and Stern of a Ship, ever since he was sent a young Youth to Sea, in or about the Year 1687. is (I must own) above my Comprehension. And yet (which adds still to the Miseries of that Island) all the Commissions, Commands, Orders, Injunctions, Directions, Judgments, and Decrees of this same Despotick Go——r, (or rather of his Triumvirate Tutors) are incomparably less liable to be reversed, than the Decrees of the most knowing as well as the most learned and judicious Lord High Chancellor of *Great Britain*.

For. 1st. There can be no Appeal from the said Go——r's Judgment, unless the *Subjectum Controversia* be of the Value of 500 *l.* at the least. 2^{dly}. None can come off that Island, on any pretence whatsoever, without the Governor's express Leave in writing, under his Hand; which is sometimes not to be obtain'd, but by giving very extravagant Bail, far beyond the Value of the Subject-Matter in Debate; and frequently not, at all, on any account. And, 3^{dly}. Even when an Appeal reacheth higher, it cannot be try'd any where, but before the Queen in Council: And the said Governor happening to be born of a great Family, (tho' he be the very Refuse and worthless Dregs thereof) his noble Relations, Allies, and their Friends here, may possibly be so far prepossessed, by a natural Byass (how imperceptible soever to themselves) in his Favour, and for supporting whatever is said to be for his Power, Interest and Credit (tho', much more properly, for that of his scandalous Tutors) that 'tis ten to one, but a poor Appellant, after all his Trouble, Pains and

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Expende, may come off, with the weeping Cross, at last; and have to say with the disappointed Alchymist, *Jamque oleum & operam perdidit.*

The melancholly Consideration of all which, as well as of the large Joint-Stock-Purse, raised from the Produce of Prize-Goods, Escheated Estates, and other Spoils of the Oppressed, which that nimble, crafty, and Jesuitical V——n (Mr. R——by) has ready at Command (as being absolute Plenipotentiary here, for the Go——r and his scandalous Faction) and likewise of the amazing Reception, Countenance and Protection he has likewise hitherto met with, makes many injur'd and oppress'd Persons in *Jamaica*, who otherwise would be Appellants, sit down tamely, and bear with their Miseries, as well as they can, for the time; rather than attempt swimming against the Stream, while they see the Torrent of their Despotick Go——r's Fury, as well as that of his Tutors and Tools, run with so impetuous and irresistible a Force, as at present; notwithstanding the manifest Bent of the Generality of the Inhabitants Inclinations against them:

But since the said Governor has, by his suffering himself to be (as he has been, all along, and still is) implicately govern'd, by the arbitrary Directions of the aforesaid Triumvirate, in all the Branches of his extensive Administration; and consequently subjected himself to the Odium of being censured for all their Mal-Practices, under the Umbrage of his Authority; and has hitherto, by the Interest of his Relations and Friends here, screen'd the said Triumvirate from Prosecutions, which otherwise would probably have fallen very heavy upon them; it may seem somewhat strange that a Person ever noted for a wretched, needy and avaricious Temper, should be so far hood-wink'd, as (among many other over-look'd Advantages) to dispense with all manner of Fees, and Perquisites whatsoever, arising by Vertue of his *Episcopal Power* above-mention'd, (which, by the by, are not inconsiderable) these three Years, last past, in favour of his pious and Orthodox Suffragan, Mr. R——by, (*vide Pag. 13, 14, 15, 16.*) And which makes such a Piece of Delusion so much still the more ridiculous, the said Ri——d R——by has banter'd the Gov——r into an implicate Belief, that he (the said R——by) holds the same, not by his Excellency's Favour, but *de Jure* as Deputy-Secretary of the Island: And his trusty Sub-Deputy (Doctor St——rt, another of the aforesaid Triumvirate) *de facto* receives the same now for him in his Absence. But the Reader will readily discover the Reason thereof, and of many much grosser Abuses, by reading the following Letter.

A L E T:

A LETTER, containing an Account of the most general Grievances of JAMAICA, arising from the Multiplication of Offices in the Person of R. R—by Esq; some of the many fraudulent Practices by which he and his Accomplices do aggrandize their own Fortunes, under the false Pretence of increasing the Queen's Revenue, by escheating many Freeholders Estates, &c. as also some short Hints touching the Characters, Designs and Principles of the said R. R—by and others.

Jamaica, 6 Octob. 1712.

S I R,

THESE having been an Embargo on all Ships here, since the Day of August, till Monday last; and no Ship arriving here, from Britain or Ireland, these two Months past, we are impatient to know what should be the Cause thereof, especially since our last Advices put us in hopes of the speedy Conclusion of a General Peace: Tho, at the same time, we have been plagued and harass'd here, with Martial Law, more than during the Heat of the War; and that too, immediately upon the back of a most terrible and destructive Hurricane; which made the Consequences of Martial Law so much the more insupportably grievous, to all the Inhabitants of this Island: But since I reckon that most of the Letters which go by this Conveyance will, of course, be cramm'd with dismal Accounts of the aforesaid Hurricane, &c. I think it needless to trouble you, or myself, with any particular Detail of the Effects thereof, at this time.

In my Letter of the 18th of July, by the Signal-Galley (to which I refer) I gave you some cursory View of the Constitution of our Government here; and withal some general Characters of the constituent Members of a certain Triumvirate, by whose Contrivance and Influence, the same is, upon every different Occasion, modell'd and metamorphos'd so as to suit with their several Purposes, from time to time.

You may remember, it was a current Story here, some Years ago, that when one of the Inhabitants of Montserrat happen'd to be consoled here, upon account of the Losses they had sustain'd there, some time before, by a Hurricane; he said, this Island was

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much more to be pitied than they, since we had got a worse and more lasting Plague amongst us, (*viz.* *B—k*) whom they had banish'd from *Montserrat*, under a severe Penalty, *never to return thither again*; even tho' he has still, to this hour (as I am credibly informed) a Legal Title to a Plantation there, which he craftily obtained, by treacherously supplanting his Client.

Had it been possible for that Person to have had as lively a Conception, and previous View of Mr. *R—by's* Contrivances and Actions here, these several Years past, as he had of *Br—k's*, he would have thought this Island most lamentably plagu'd with a witness, to see them the two chief constituent Members of the *Triumvirate* aforesaid, and acting here in concert. Nor indeed can I foresee when an End may be put to the many afflicting Grievances under which this poor discouraged Island doth now labour, until some Men of Eminence in the Government at home, be fully appriz'd, and take Cognizance of the said *R—by's* Character and Conduct, in a very special manner: For which end, I adventure to send you now an introductory Account of some part thereof; by which it may appear, that a Person of such Jesuitical Principles and Practices as *R—by* is singularly noted for, is too hard a Match for the Simplicity and plain Dealing of the Generality of our Planters here.

The said Mr. *R—by* having had some Years Schooling on the Foundation of *Eaton College* (as one of his Cotemporaries, a Planter of this Island, inform'd me) he served some time thereafter in the Quality of Clerk to an Attorney in the *Temple*, (as one of his Father's Apprentices (now likewise a Planter in this Island, told me:) But having, it seems, more aspiring Thoughts, and being of a Family that pretended to some Merit at the Court of *St. Germains*, he took a Trip thither, and remain'd some Years abroad; where (as I am likewise inform'd) he had the chief part of his Education with the Jesuits, both in *France* and *Italy*. However, finding the *Jacobite* Interest decline apace, and being disappointed of what he propos'd to himself and sollicit'd for at *St. Germains*, (as a Gentleman, who was then intimate with him in *France*, likewise inform'd me) he return'd for *England*. But his extreme Modesty not allowing him to put in for any publick Business in *England*, where his Character, and that of his Family, were pretty well known, he transacted, in the Year 1705. with Mr. *Edward Hyde*, the then Provost-Marshal of this Island, for resigning in his Favour, and procuring him (the said *R—by*) a new Grant or Patent for that Office, in consideration of a certain Sum of Money, to be paid at such Times, and in such Manner, and Proportions, as was then agreed upon: And the said Mr. *Hyde* acting only by a Deputy, and knowing (it seems) but very little of the Nature or Value of that Place, was (as I am likewise credibly inform'd) sufficiently imposed upon, in making that Bargain.

However, Mr. *R—by* arriving here, soon after, with the Character and Authority of Provost-Marshal General of this Island, and giving himself the Air of being a strict Assertor of the Court-Principles

ciples then, and still, most in fashion here, did, by his natural Cunning, with the help of his acquired Parts, so transform himself into several Shapes, as Occasion offer'd, and adapt his Measures to such various Purposes as he had in view, that he thereby rendered himself so very acceptable to the then Governor, that, in a short time thereafter, he became the chief Favourite.

At the Governor's Request, Colonel *B——r* (a Gentleman of loyal and worthy Principles (and having a very opulent Fortune here) was prevail'd upon to be Security (for Form's sake, as it were) in a Bond of 4000 *l.* for the said Mr. *R—by*'s faithful Discharge of his Office, as Provost-Marshal; tho' an absolute Stranger to him, at the time: But happening to go, both of them in Company, to the Bath, up to Windward, and remaining some time there, drinking the Waters, the said *R—by* did so perpetually teaze that Gentleman with repeated Lectures out of his beloved *Vade mecum* (*Machiavel's Works*) and, with all the force of his Rhetorick, did so endeavour to inculcate the like political Principles in him, that, ever thereafter, Colonel *B——r* look'd upon him (the said *R—by*) as the most dangerous and ensnaring Person, and of the most loose and pernicious Principles, of all the Men that ever he knew, in this Island: And being, therefore, resolved not to have any farther Dealing or Familiarity with him, gave him Warning to find other Security, for that he was determin'd not to continue bound any longer for him.

The said Mr. *R—by*, upon the Death, or other Removal of the then Clerk of the Council, and Deputy-Secretary of this Island, was, by the then Governor's Favour, in or about the Month of *October*, 1706. appointed to succeed in the Execution of these Offices; and, by Virtue of the same Interest, obtain'd, in or about the Year 1707. from Mr. *Baber*, the Patentee, a Deputation for executing the several Offices and Places of Secretary of this Island, Clerk of the Enrolments, and Commissary-General of Stores, Provisions, &c. for the small yearly Consideration of 250 *l.* as I am informed.

And it happening so, that, though many Complaints were exhibited to the Governor, Council and Assembly, against the said Mr. *R—by*, for all'dg'd Male-administrations committed, and arbitrary extravagant Fees exacted by him or his Deputies, in or about the Execution of the said several and respective Offices; yet, by his great Power and Interest with the then Governor, the same were always slighted, shuffled, or put off, from time to time, till the said Governor and Council were, by repeated Complaints and Importunities, (as I am credibly informed) prevail'd upon, at last, to make an Order, or Rule of Council, That he (the said Mr. *R—by*) or any other succeeding Clerk of the Council, should not, as such, demand or receive, from any Tradesman or others, any Gratuity, Fee, or Reward whatsoever; but that, in consideration thereof, such Clerk should be allowed 10 *s.* and no more, out of the Publick Revenue, for every Order of the Governor and Council, touching the Payment of Money, &c. or in Words to that effect:

Whereupon Mr. *R*—by took occasion, some time thereafter, to compliment Governor *Handasyd*, by resigning the said Office of Clerk of the Council, in favour of Mr. *Silvester Struckley*, his Excellency's Secretary at the time.

And as a farther Confirmation of the Truth of the aforesaid Charge against Mr. *R*—by, the Assembly of this Island, convened at *St. Jago de la Vega*, on the 17th of April, 1711. did, upon examining the Truth of the several Matters of Fact, mentioned in the Petitions, or Complaints, then exhibited against him, Vote and Resolve, *nemine contradicente*, That He (the said Mr. *R*—by, was guilty of having demanded several arbitrary and exorbitant Fees, &c. And thereupon ordered, That a Bill for regulating Fees (which was in a former Session passed by the Governor, Council, and Assembly, on the like account, tho' refused at home) should be then again brought in, with such proper Amendments, as were directed by Her Majesty in Council; and in pursuance thereof, the said Governor, Council and Assembly, passed an Act for regulating Fees accordingly.

Here I must not omit informing you, That, some time after passing the aforesaid unanimous Resolve of the Assembly, Mr. *R*—by did, by his dextrous Management, obtain a subsequent Vote, That he had executed the Office of Secretary of this Island to the Satisfaction of the House; or in Words to that effect; which happen'd thus: While this Matter was depending before the Assembly, he affected a political Sickness, and gave out, in a seeming private manner, that he intended to quit the Island, for the Recovery of his Health, &c. and made Offers of resigning some one or other of the Offices then executed by him, to each of several Persons, who, by their respective Relations had Interest with, and Influence on some Members of the Assembly; and having, by means of such Assurance, as he gave the Candidates for these Offices respectively, taken off the Edge of their Friends in the Assembly, who promised to favour him, and use their Interest with other Members likewise, on the aforesaid account, the said last Vote was carried in his favour, in manner above recited: And tho' several pretended Bargains for resigning the aforesaid Offices, to several Persons, were carried on so far, that some of the Parties sent Credit, and others actually remitted Money to England, for that effect; yet the real Ends for which the aforesaid pretended Resignments were first offered, being fully answered, none of the said Bargains were ever fulfilled or comply'd with by Mr. *R*—by, to this hour.

However, without any regard to these pretended Bargains, the same Governor, Council and Assembly were so fully convinced of Mr. *R*—by's over-dextrous Management (not to give it a harder Name) in the Execution of the several Offices abovementioned, and of the dangerous Consequences that did and might attend the executing them, by one and the same Person, that, for prevention thereof, for the future, they made an Act in the Month of June, 1711. That from and after the first Day of May, 1712. no Secretary, or Deputy Secretary, for the time being, in this Island, should be ca-

pable to hold, use, exercise, or enjoy the Office or Place of Provost-Marshal, or Deputy Provost-Marshal of this Island, or, by any Ways or Means, to execute or officiate in that Office, or any other Office of Profit in this Island: And that no Provost-Marshal or Deputy Provost-Marshal of this Island, should be capable to hold, use, exercise, or enjoy the Office or Place of Secretary, or Deputy-Secretary of this Island, or by any Ways or Means to execute or officiate in that Office, or any other Office of Profit in this Island: But that the same and all other Offices of Profit in this Island, should be, for ever thereafter, distinct and separate, so as that no two or more Offices of Profit in this Island should, upon any Pretence whatsoever, be in the Hands of any one Person; or any one Person receive the Profits of two or more of the said Offices, &c.

But the Assembly had at the same time such a dutiful Regard to the Queen's Prerogative in granting Patents, to whom Her Majesty should think fit, that they added a special Clause to the said Act; reserving the same; to the end it might not meet with any Obstruction in obtaining the Royal Assent at home.

Mr. R—by carried his Resentment so far against Mr. Beckford the then Speaker, and other leading Members of that Assembly, that he, and some few others in his Interest, prevail'd with the then Governor (upon a sham Pretence) to dissolve 'em, in or about the Month of June, 1711. (which was but two Months from the time of their first Convention) and to issue out new Writs for another Assembly to be conven'd at *St. Jago de la Vega*, on Monday the 23^d of July following: In the Interval of which time, his Excellency, the Lord Archibald Hamilton, our present Governor, arriving here, the said new Assembly met accordingly, on the aforesaid 23^d Day of July; have been continued, by several Prorogations, ever since; and are, in all Appearance, likely to be continued the standing Assembly of this Island, as long as the said Mr. R—by and Mr. B—ck, our present Attorney-General, are supported in the unlimited Influence which they now have on the Administration of all publick Affairs here; for many of the Members of the present Assembly having, very unexpectedly, and in a most surprizing manner, been chosen, with much more sinister Art than ever was practis'd in, or about any former Elections in this Island; and being, by reason of their narrow Circumstances, and the assumed Privileges they enjoy, of being protected against their lawful Creditors, implicitly devoted to the arbitrary Dictates of Messieurs R—by and B—ck, in all Matters that can come before them; it is not to be supposed, that such thorough-pac'd Tools will be readily parted with, as long as they can be kept together.

Now, considering that Mr. R—by, as Provost Marshal-General, is, by his Deputies, Marshals, and Deputy-M Marshals, the Executioner of the Law, both in Civil and Criminal Cases; and is (by Deputation from Mr. Baber the Patentee) Secretary of the Island, Commissary-General, and Clerk of the Enrolments, for Registering all Deeds and Conveyances, all Bills of Sale, Letters Patents, and other Acts and Matters usually enrolled here; and has likewise (even to the manifest Prejudice of the Governor himself) the Benefit

of all Fees and Perquisites of and for all Probates of Wills and Testaments, the granting of all Letters of Administration, and all Licenses for Marriage, &c. It was no small surprize to most of the intelligent and thinking Men of this Island, to see him, (the said *R—by*) advanced yet farther, to be one of the Council-Board, by Virtue of a Privy-Seal, which the present Governor was prevailed upon, by the Perswasions of Sir *C—s W—r*, and Messieurs *K—t* and *T—n*, to bring over along with him, for that end : And indeed the Concern of the Inhabitants for his aforesaid Promotion, seems to be too well grounded, because (as being a Member of the Council, in conjunction with his aforesaid Offices) he acts now in a Legislative, Judicial, and Executive Capacity ; and by means of that accumulated Power, together with his manifest Influence on the Governor, in all respects whatsoever, seems to be uncontrollably skreen'd and protected from all manner of Complaints that dare now be exhibited against himself, or his Deputies ; and has too great an Opportunity of justifying any Male-administrations that can happen in the Execution of all and singular the Offices and Matters respectively before-mention'd.

Many of the original Deeds and Securities of several Persons Estates in this Island having been, through Course of Time, and the Influence of this Climate, worn and defac'd, and many others quite lost, by the terrible and never to be forgotten Earthquake, which happen'd here in the Year 1692. the great Fire that destroyed all *Port Royal* a second time, in the Year 1702. and, probably too, by the late dreadful Hurricane, which happen'd in *August* last ; nothing can possibly be of greater Importance, for the Security of the Freeholders of this Island, touching the quiet and peaceable Possessions of their Estates, than that the publick Records and Enrolments of all Patents, Deeds and Conveyances, be taken Care of, so ~~that~~ as it may not be in the Power of any Person, entrusted with the Custody thereof, to withdraw, conceal, destroy, or otherwise embezzle, any of the aforesaid Records ; Yet (to the great Surprize, Disquiet, and irreparable Loss of many Freeholders here, who purchased their Estates for valuable Considerations) a Discovery has been made, within these few Years past, that the publick Records and Enrolments of all Deeds and Conveyances, made here in the Years 1671 and 1672. are lost or withdrawn, (no body can tell which way :) And Mr. *R—by* and his Accomplices having the Opportunity of searching and making Enquiries into such Defects, as may possibly seem to be in the Connexion of several Freeholders Rights to the Possession and Enjoyment of their respective Estates, purchased as aforesaid. Many more sinister Uses have been made, in Mr. *R—by*'s time, of the casual losing of real Deeds, Conveyances and Records, in manner above-mention'd, under the Pretence of escheating such Estates to the Queen, than ever were made in 40 Years before ; which made the Governor, Council and Assembly, in or about the Month of *July*, 1711. pass another Act, intituled, *An Act for the further quieting Mens Possessions, and preventing vexatious Suits at Law, &c.* to prevent the
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trumping up, for the future (under the false colour of serving the Interest of the Crown) several pretended Grounds for Escheating many honest and laborious Planters Estates, and, at the same time, clandestinely securing Grants thereof to themselves or their Friends, sometimes under borrowed Names, for trifling and very small Considerations to the Crown, bearing no manner of Proportion to the true Value thereof.

And that it may manifestly appear how very grossly both the Crown and the Subject have, of late Years, been, and still are imposed upon, by such sinister and unjustifiable Practices : You are, in the first place, to know, That as there have been but very few (if any) Estates in this Island escheated as aforesaid, before Mr. *R—by's* time ; so upon complaint made, several Years ago, by Col. *R—d Ll—d*, Mr. *Wh—ch*, and others, then at *London*, touching some Abuses of that kind, and particularly in relation to a certain Number of Negro-slaves pretended to have been escheated to the Queen, and of which Mr. *R—by* had obtain'd a Grant in his own Favour, from the late Governor *Handasyd* ; her Majesty, for preventing the like Abuses, for the future, was graciously pleased to order, that Restitution should be made of these Negroes, to the rightful Owner, and to give successive Orders and Instructions, ever since, both to the late and present Governor of this Island, *not to dispose of any Fine, Forfeiture or Escheat, of above the Value of Ten Pounds, to any Person whatsoever, without first acquainting her Majesty therewith.*

Yet, to frustrate Her Majesty's most Gracious Intentions, by such her Royal Instructions, all Writs of Escheat being directed to the Provost-Marshal and his Deputies, Care is always taken to empanel such packt Juries as will, either through Ignorance or Design, or both, (tho' upon Oath) make their Return of any Estate, under Inquisition at the Time, to be of as little value as, under any colourable Pretence whatever, they possibly can ; and that too, for three several Reasons : 1. To the end that the estimated Value return'd by the Jury may not exceed the Sum limited by Her Majesty's aforesaid Instructions, and so fall within the Governor's Gift, without being obliged to make any Application to Her Majesty, the Lord High Treasurer, the Secretary of State, or the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations, pursuant to Her Majesty's aforesaid Instructions touching the same.

2. Because by how much the less any escheatable Estate is valued by such Jury for the Queen, so much the more room will there be left for the Escheat-Patentee's giving a good round Composition to the Governor, Provost-Marshal, Attorney-General, &c.

3. To the end that, in case an Heir happen to appear, and put in his Claim to any Estate escheated as aforesaid, before the Expiration of the three Years allowed and limited by an Act of this Island, the Escheat-Patentee may not be liable to account for the real Value, or Produce of such Estate, during the Time of its continuance in his Possession ; but only according to the sham Estimate thereof, return'd by the Jury.

Thus, for Example, *Nathaniel Herring*, Esq; a Member both of the last and present Assembly, having bought a Plantation of about 540 Acres of Land, in the Parish of *Westmorland*, (where great part of his paternal Estate lies) and being one of those Gentlemen who had, all along, too discerning a Sense of the crafty Designs of our Triumvirate, to suffer themselves to have been prevail'd upon, by any artful Insinuations, or circular Contrivances whatsoever, to prostitute their Reason, and the common Interest of the Island so far, as to give the Suffrage of their Votes implicitly, either in Elections or Assemblies, to the fraudulent Proposals, or magisterial Dictates of the said Triumvirate (as too many poor-spirited truckling Fools, and others worse than Fools, have done.) And our vigilant Triumvirate never slipping any Opportunity by which they may exert their Power over, and execute their Revenge upon all Men of stanch and honourable Principles, as occasion may offer; *Mr. Herring* had Notice given him that they were fully determin'd to pick a Hole in his Pocket, by trumping up some Pretence or other for escheating the Plantation which he had then lately bought, as aforesaid, under the Colour of some seeming Defect which they had discover'd in the Connexion of the Conveyances thereof to him. Whereupon, considering that the Judges of the Grand-Court, who were to judge thereof, were absolutely at the Beck and Disposal of the Governor and his Governors, (the Triumvirate aforesaid) That the Appealing from that Court to the Governor and Council of this Island, (as they are now stated) would have been much the same as leaping out of the Frying-pan into the Fire; And that Appealing again from these to the Queen and Council at home, would not only have been attended with great Difficulties and Expences, and might have had a very uncertain Event; but that likewise in any Event whatsoever, the whole Subject-Matter was not of a Value sufficient to have answer'd all that Hazard, Labour, Costs and Loss of Time; *Mr. Herring* was advis'd (as the safest Course, for making the best of a bad Market) to take the start of the Triumvirate's Tools, by informing against himself; that is, by taking out a Writ of Escheat, on the aforesaid pretended Ground; to the end that, as being the Informer, and at the Charge of suing the said Writ, in the Queen's Name; Custom would, in a great measure, entitle him to have had the Refusal of the Gift thereof from the Governor, upon the Terms and Conditions usual in such Cases. Upon the whole Matter, the Provost-Marshal impanel'd such a Jury, as, upon Inquisition, returned the Value of the said Plantation to be to the Queen no more than $l. 1 : 2 : 6$. And yet, besides all manner of Fees to the Provost-Marshal, Attorney-General, Grand-Court, Clerk of the Patents, &c. *Mr. Herring* was, by private Composition with the aforesaid Triumvirate, screwed up, and forced to give a Premium of $l. 300$ to the present Governor, for an Escheat-Patent of the said Plantation, though previously bought by him, as aforesaid.

Nor did they think it enough to pinch him in that manner; but when, at last he agreed to their own Terms, and offer'd, in payment of the said £. 300. to give the Governor accepted Bills, under the Hands of his Factors, (two sufficient Merchants at *Kingston*) for the like Value; the Triumvirate would not allow his Excellency to accept thereof: Mr. *Herring* then offer'd (in regard he was necessarily pre-engaged to go 30 or 40 Leagues to leeward, by a Sloop that was ready to sail thither from *Port-Royal*, very early next Morning) to give an obligatory Note under the Hand of his Brother-in-law, *Peter Beckford*, Esq; (who is, you know, a Gentleman of as considerable an Estate and good Credit as any Man in this Island) for the Payment of the said £. 300 in 24 Hours time; that is, as soon as the Money could be conveniently brought from *Kingston*: Yet the said Triumvirate still dissuaded his Excellency from accepting any Bill or Note whatsoever, in payment of the said £. 300, but only ready Money; alledging, at the same time, that the said Mess. *Beckford* and *Herring* must have had some Design of tricking his Excellency, by their urging him to accept of any Note or Bill in Payment of the Premium above-mention'd: Whereupon Mr. *Herring* (to save his then intended Passage by the said Sloop) was forc'd to go immediately to *Kingston*, for the said £. 300, which, upon his Return, he paid in Specie, about 9 or 10 a-Clock that same Night, at Doctor *Stewart's* House; where his Excellency boarded at the time.

And yet, after all, (by the Suggestions and Insligations of this same Triumvirate, *R——by*, *Br——k*, and *St——t*) their hopeful Pupil, our wise, judicious, learned, pious, great, magnanimous, and generous Governor, (able to defend us both by Sea and Land *) has, several times since, upbraided not only Mr. *Herring*, but likewise Mr. *Beckford*, with alledged Ingratitude, for voting and acting, upon several Occasions, against what he was pleas'd to call his Interest, after he had condescended to take the above-said Premium of £. 300, for what, he said, he was inform'd since, was worth £. 500.

By all which you may plainly see after what manner Men of Probity and Integrity, and who have a due Regard to the Interest of their Fellow-Subjects, whom they represent in the Assembly, are, and still must expect to be treated, while the Administration of the Government here is continued in the Hands of these rapacious and devouring Cormorants.

But, to the end this may not seem to be the only Instance of such Proceedings, I'll furnish you with some few others, of many more, that may (if needful) be given of our Triumvirate's over dextrous Management in relation to Escheats; without regard to either the Degree, Quality, Character or Circumstances of the Person aggrieved, or to be aggrieved thereby; provided They may, by any ways

* A Phrase us'd by Mr. *R——y* in a fulsom Panegyrick on the Governor.

or means whatsoever, obtain their Ends : For indeed, all is good Fish to them, that once happens to come into their Net.

Thus, altho' *Nicholas Blake*, of the Parish of *St Elizabeth*, a Quaker, did obtain, from the late Governor *Handasyd*, a Patent under the Broad Seal of this Island, for a Plantation, to him and his Heirs for ever, consisting of two Parcels of Land, which contain, by Survey, about 1100 Acres, in the said Parish, bearing Date the 19th of *January*. 17¹²/₁₇ (whether as having been then escheated to the Queen, or not, I cannot positively charge my Memory, at present : However, I dare venture to say, that Patent was not obtain'd *per formam Pauperis*) yet, be all that as it will, most certain it is that, upon the said Governor *Handasyd*'s Removal and Departure for *England*, our nimble Triumvirate quickly transferring their mercenary Idol-worship from the late to the present Object thereof, fell upon Ways and Means to perswade the said *Nicholas Blake*, that, by reason of some pretended Defect in the above-recited Patent, &c. the Lands therein mention'd were still escheatable to the Queen ; and that the only Remedy he had left him, for maintaining the Possession, and obtaining the indisputable Right thereof, was (for the preventing any other Informer, as in the aforesaid Case of *Mr. Herring*) to inform, and take out a Writ of Escheat against himself, &c. And that, upon his Surrender of the aforesaid Patent, and giving some reasonable Consideration for a new Patent of Escheat, in ample Manner and Form, for the aforesaid Lands and Appurtenances, the same might be unquestionably secur'd to him and his Heirs for ever : Whereupon he being prevail'd with to proceed accordingly, the Provost-Marshal impanel'd such a Jury, as, upon Inquisition, return'd the total Value of both the said Parcels of Land to be, to the Queen, no more than 2 l. 2 s 6 d. And yet, besides all manner of Fees and extraordinary Considerations to the Provost-Marshal and his Deputies, to the Attorney General, the Grand Court, Clerk of the Patents, &c. the said *Nicholas Blake* was, by private Composition with the aforesaid Triumvirate and their Pupil, prevail'd with (I will not say forced) to surrender and deliver up the said Patent, which he had so very lately obtain'd from the late Governor *Handasyd*, and to give a Premium of 300 l. to the Lord *Ar--d Ha--on*, our present Governor, for a new Patent of the same Lands, granted *de novo*, in *March* last, to him the said *Nicholas Blake*, and his Heirs for ever.

I will not say that any compulsory Arts were made use of, for making *Nicholas Blake* come into the Measures and Agreement aforesaid ; for, it may be said, *Volenti non fit Injuria* : But I assure you, he himself complain'd to me, and others too, that it cost him several Journeys from Leeward, besides the Trouble of bringing his Friend *Isaac Gale*, oftner than once, from *Kingston* to *Spanish Town*, to sollicite on his behalf, and to beat down the demanded Premium of 500 l. for the said last Patent, before the said Escheat Brokers condescended at last to accept of 300 l. for the Governor's Share ; and farther too, that a positive Stop was put to his obtaining what's

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commonly granted, of course, to all Persons requiring the same, on the ordinary Conditions (*viz.* an Order for surveying and measuring out some Waft-Land) until first he'd take out the said last Patent, and give up the former, &c. which when done, he then got the said Order to the Surveyor of course. Now whether such Practice will answer the Triumvirate's pretended Zeal of serving Her Majesty's Interest, and encreasing the Revenue of the Crown, I leave it to you, or any other indifferent Person to judge.

It were an endless Labour to enumerate all the particular Circumstances of such Cases; and therefore I shall, for the future, give you only some farther Instances of the scandalous Difference which these Escheat-Jobbers make between the pretended and' real Value of such Estates as fall by (hook or by crook) under their Management.

A small Plantation containing, by Survey, about 52 Acres of Land, in the Parish of *St. Elizabeth*, was upon Inquisition, by a Jury, valued to the Queen at no more than 2 s. 2 d. $\frac{1}{2}$. And yet, in consideration of an Escheat-Patent for the same, Mr. *John Foster* (the Son-in-law, if I mistake not, of the aforementioned *Nicholas Blake*) paid, as a private Premium, 50 l. to the present Governor, beside all ordinary Fees and extraordinary Charges, &c. as in the former Cases above-recited.

In like manner, five several Parcels of Land, containing, by Survey, about 200 Acres, situated in the Parish of *Westmorland*, were, upon Inquisition, by a Jury, valued to the Queen only at 8 Shillings and 4 Pence: And yet (beside all Fees, and other extraordinary Charges, as in the preceding Cases) *William Dorrel* of the said Parish of *Westmorland*, in consideration of an Escheat-Patent of the Premises to him and his Heirs, paid (as I am credibly informed) a Premium, in large Cattle, to the Value of 2 or 300 l. to the present Governor; and was, by Agreement, oblig'd to fatten them all at his own Charge, before Delivery.

Here I cannot forbear observing, even with Horror and Indignation, that Persons intrusted with the most important Part of the Administration of the Government of so considerable a Colony as this Island of *Jamaica*, having had tolerable good Education, and professing themselves to be Christians, should yet nevertheless (instead of answering these honourable, just and worthy Ends of Government, for which they were commission'd by Her Majesty) be so depraved in their Nature, so openly profane in their Conversation, and so flagranty wicked in their Practices, as not only to make the chief Principles of the Christian Religion (not exempting the Sacred Text it self) too frequently the Subject of their licentious Witticisms and Ridicule, but likewise gratify their most scandalously avaricious Appetites, at the rate of looking out for, picking, culling, seducing and employing Dozens, at a time, of such abandon'd, servile Wretches, as, without any regard to the sacred Nature of an Oath, make no scruple, for certain valuable Considerations (such perhaps as the cramming their nasty Guts full with Meat and Drink, &c.) to return, upon Oath, That an E-

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state demonstratively worth several Hundreds of Pounds, is worth only some few Shillings and Pence. For my part, I must own, it is as yet a Moot Case with me, which of the two, whether such wretched Jurors, or these crafty and designing Knaves who delude and imploy them, are the most criminal, *in foro Conscientia*, for the manifest Perjuries that necessarily attend such flagitious and most unaccountable Practices.

Yet we have, indeed, a sort of Protestant-Jesuits among us here (at least such as call themselves Protestants, whatever Education they may have had, or Profession they were of, when in *France*, *Italy*, or *Ireland*) who by fallacious and metaphysical Distinctions, especially in Cases touching the Escheating of Estates, the Pleading in, and judging of Causes, the framing and interpreting of Laws, the consulting, advising and intermediating with the Governor and others in Authority or Power, about Decrees, Judgments, Letters of Administration, Probates of Wills, and Testaments, Favours, Rewards or Punishments, for or against Favourites or Adversaries, &c. can as nicely split a Hair, and as nimbly trump up equivocal and elusory Solutions, for tender and scrupulous Consciences, as any *Sorbon*, *St. Omers*, or *Salamanca* Casuist Doctor of them all.

This brings into my Mind a very diverting Scene, that happen'd here last Winter : *Don Gulielmo Morfeo*, Captain General and Governor in chief of the *Spanish Coast of St. Domingo*, having been in his Passage to the *Havana*, surprized by one of our Privateer Sloops, stript of a considerable Sum of Money, and other valuable Goods, and brought a Prisoner into this Island; he was, upon the account of his Character, treated as a Prisoner of War, at large, entertain'd very civilly by our Governor, the Triumvirate, the Gentlemen of the Council and others; and frequently invited to dine at our Governor's Table (or rather indeed that of *Stewart* and *Rigby*; the Governor then lodging and dining with them.) This *Don Gulielmo*, tho' a most bigotted Papist, being nevertheless a declared and irreconcilable Enemy to the Jesuits, and declaiming frequently, with bitter Investives, against their whole Order, Principles and Morals, as destructive to human Society, and most injurious to him in particular; *Mr. R—by*, on the other hand, (whether only for the sake of Argument, for exercising his Wit, and shewing the Exquisteness of his Parts, or upon what other Account I shall not say) as frequently contradicted the *Don*; alledging that many of these Maxims and Positions exploded and decry'd by him, were necessary for the Safety and Support of Government, &c. Whereupon, after several repeated Conversations and Disputes on these Political Topicks, at different Times, the *Don* at last, with a very serious Air, openly at Dinner, (your Friend *Mr. March* and several others being present) advised our Governor to beware of *Mr. Rigby*, as a dangerous Man (calling him, at the same time, to his Face, *Jesuita Romano*, *Jesuita Italiano*) for that none but a Jesuit, or a Disciple of that Order, would so zealously maintain their Politicks and Principles. This the *Don* repeated afterwards, in several publick Companies, both in the Tavern and Coffee-house.

But,

But, from that Day forward, the poor *Don* was never invited to dine with our Governor ; and Mr. *R—by* never ceased till he prevailed with the Governor and Council, to send the said *Don Gulielmo Morfeo*, by one of the Queen's Ships then ready to sail, for *England* ; and (as I am inform'd) with as ignominious and opprobrious a Character of him to the Secretary of State, as Mr. *R—by's* Malice and Relentment could invent.

Nor will this seem, at all, very strange to you, when I assure you farther, That, in the open Coffee-house, in Presence, and to the Hearing of several Officers, and other Gentlemen of undoubted Veracity, this same celebrated Wit and Politician of ours (Mr. *Rigby*) has, with seeming great Alacrity, and all the Marks of an inward Satisfaction and Pleasure, openly read and lectur'd upon several Chapters of Mr. *Whiston's* late flaming Book, renewing the *Arian* Heresy : From which (without any great Breach of the Rules of common Charity) one might very naturally be apt to conclude, that a Person taking Pleasure in propagating so heretical and dangerous a Doctrine, in such manner as aforesaid, has given too much ground to suspect, that, if he is not already fully confirmed in that Heresy, he is at least pretty far advanced in becoming one of the Disciples of the heterodox Author above-named.

And to remove the Suspicion of my being thought too much prejudic'd on this Head, I must crave leave to acquaint you further, that, on *St. Stephen's Day*, immediately after Dinner, a certain Gentleman, who, among his many other admirable Qualities, is singularly noted for his consummated Skill in modern Politicks, was pleas'd, with a peculiar Gaiety of Humour, to entertain our Governor, and some other Gentlemen, then present, (particularly Mr. *Taber*, the Rector of *St. Katharine's* Parish) with a summary and witty Account (as some others beside himself seem'd then to think) of his own Faith, in Words to the following Effect, viz. That whatever Divines and Philosophers were pleas'd to profess, all Men, (excepting Fools and Mad-men) made their Interest the chief Object of their Desires, and squared their Actions accordingly, when-ever they weigh'd things deliberately. That, for his own part, tho' (as he said) he had read *Machiavel's* Works several times over, he always found something new therein, worthy of Observation ; and own'd withall, that he never found any thing therein, but what he thought might more easily be defended and justified, than many things in the Bible : That, as to the Pentateuch, or five Books of *Moses*, he must beg the Doctor's Pardon, (meaning Mr. *Taber*) if he could not screw up his Belief to such a high Pin, as to think them altogether Canonical, or (to speak more properly as he said) authentick : That as for *Moses* himself, he consider'd him as little better than such another Prophet as *Mahomet* : That by his greater Skill in Magick, and Dexterity in Legerdemain Tricks, he had fallen upon the Knack of making his Serpent eat up the other Magicians Serpents : but that his not having been a better Man than he should have been, was too manifest, even from the Story (allowing it to have been true) which he wrote

of himself, of his having murder'd the honest *Egyptian* in the Highway ; and that his having been conscious of the Heinousness of his Guilt, appear'd undeniably from his having hid the dead Body in the Sand, and then made his Escape, and fled away into the Land of *Midian* : That if *Moses* were to have been tried for that Murder, at our Grand Court here in *Jamaica*, he (our said Politician) would not run the Hazard of standing in his stead, for a good round Sum, &c.

But, as I would willingly, as far as in me lieth, do Justice to any Person, who, by the Sacredness of his Function, is set apart for the Service of the Altar, I must not omit acquainting you, that (how obsequious soever Mr. *Taber* is alledged to be, upon other Occasions, to too many of our Court-Fashions, and to the Rules of what is commonly, (tho' most absurdly call'd Good-fellowship) yet he then very discreetly (as I am well assured) took up our Political Dictator, and confuted his distorted Gloss on that Text in the 2d Chapter of the Book of *Exodus*, from the 7th Chapter of the Acts of the holy Apostles, where that Action and Proof of *Moses's* Zeal, for the Safety and Deliverance of his oppressed Brethren, is fully resumed and explain'd. And Mr. *Taber* had, at the same time, the Modesty to own and declare, that the aforesaid Text of the New Testament might probably have escap'd his Memory, and our Dictator might, with some seeming Victory, have triumph'd, at that Instant, if he (the said Mr. *Taber*) had not casually, that very Morning, read the said whole Chapter, because the Epistle for the Day (according to the Service of our Church) is taken out of it.

It would be an endless Piece of Drudgery, to give you a full Recital of the many profane Witticisms with which this Dictator has occasionally diverted himself and some others of his Brethren in Iniquity, about several Fragments of the Sacred Oracles, and the Order of Priesthood in general ; for which Reason I'll trouble you now only with one Instance more of this polite and singularly well accomplish'd Gentleman's Regard to Christianity, by the Concern which he shew'd for the most solemn Act of Devotion, as well as the most sacred Ordinance in the whole System of the Christian Religion, viz. the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

Our present Governor having, in compliance with the Sacramental Test, appointed by Act of Parliament, resolv'd to receive the holy Communion, on the 5th of *August*, 1711. as being the first Sunday of the Month, immediately after his having enter'd upon the Administration of the Government here ; and none of the Gentlemen of the Council or Assembly happening to have then receiv'd the Communion, with his Excellency, except only Doctor S—t and Mr. R—by ; our polite and nicely well-bred Gentleman (upon his Return from Church, after Divine Service) was pleas'd to say, That out of Respect to a Person of the Governor's Birth and Quality, and especially at his first Appearance among us as Governor, all the Gentlemen of the Council and Assembly then in Town, ought, in good Manners, to have taken the Sacrament that Day, whatever they'd do, at any other time ; and that he thought the Governor should

should look upon their Neglect in not having taken it then, as a Mark of Disrespect to himself : As if that most sacred Institution were to be consider'd and gone about, as a Matter of no greater Weight or Importance than as a Point of meer Ceremony and Complement : But that indeed he, and some few others of his Brethren-Communicants thought no better of it, was too scandalously manifest from the Grossness of their ludicrous and sensual Preparations the Night before, and a Repetition of the same vile (if not worse) libidinous Exercises, the very next Night after receiving it. The whole was such an astonishing mixt Scene of a seemingly Christian-Devotion, impious Profanation, and Heathenish Lasciviousness, as I must own I could not readily have believed practicable, even by the most abandon'd Wretches passing under the Denomination of Christians, had I not then had more than ordinary Proof thereof : And to mend the Matter, after having shot for some time thus at random, one of these worthy Communicants has since, in a most solemn and avowed, tho' licentious Manner, changed Colours. Nor do some People scruple to fore-tell, from several probable Prognosticks, already come to pass, that, as a Proof of his future Constancy, and for the Honour of his Family, he may possibly in time, be prevail'd upon to celebrate a certain Popish Sacrament, from which many thousands, in the Case of *Athan* or *Socrates*, would as gladly be absolved.

But here, (to give the Devil his Due, as the Proverbial Saying is) I must do our *Corpus Juris*, Mr. B——k, the Justice to acquaint you, that tho' he be pretty much taken Notice of, for having so many different Lodgings at once, and keeping such a numerous Seraglio of Black Cattle, (a Name ironically given sometimes here, to Negro Wenches) and was, upon our present Governor's Arrival preferred to the Office and Place of her Majesty's Attorney General in this Island, whereby it was thought he would have been oblig'd, of course, to have taken the Sacramental Test ; yet so far was this conscientious Gentleman from joining with his Brethren of the Triumvirate, in profaning the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, by becoming an unworthy Receiver thereof, that he chose rather not to take it at all ; And to the end he might not seem singular in that particular, he farther (as the incontrollable Oracle of our Law, a true Son of the Church, and nice Casuist in Divinity) did endeavour to persuade some other publick Officers, particularly Mr. F——s M——g, that there was no occasion for their taking the Sacrament on that Account, nor for troubling their Heads about it ; for that the Laws of *England* did not reach this Place, except in some special Cases.

So that, to conclude this seeming Digression, I must take the Liberty to assure you, that the many pernicious Consequences which the loose and vicious Examples of some Persons at the Helm of our Government here, produce in the Lives, Morals and Principles, of too many of the Populace, afford no small Matter of serious Reflection ; and are so much the rather to be regretted and reformed, because there seems to be such a Measure of Tractability, and Plia-

bleness

bleness of Disposition in the Natures of the Generality of the Inhabitants, as renders them very susceptible either of good or bad Impressions, suitable to such Examples as are laid before them, by their Superiors; according to that of the Poet;

Regis ad Exemplum totus componitur orbis.

which makes it still the greater Pity, that these few Persons who have the chief Influence on the Administration of all our publick Affairs, and some of those also who are appointed to be our Spiritual Guides here, are not Men of such solid and well-grounded Principles, or exemplary Lives, as were to be wish'd for; for it is not to be expected, that pure and wholesom Streams can run out of impure and poison'd Fountains. And tho' it be undoubtedly much easier, and attended with far less Pain of Body, as well as with less Care, Anxiety and Perturbation of Mind, TO BE VIRTUOUS THAN TO BE VICIOUS; yet it is generally allow'd, that the Corruption of our Natures has, for the most part, such a predominant Bias on our Inclinations, that we are more prone to imitate vicious than virtuous Examples; and are so much the more so, when such Examples seem to carry along with them the Authority and Sanction of Men in Power; as the same is elegantly express'd by *Juvenal*, in his 14th Satyr:

*Sic Natura jubet; velocius & citius nos
Corrumpunt Vitiourum Exempla Domestica, Magnis
Quum subeunt animo Auctoribus.*————

And the same Author, a little after, subjoins the Reason,

———— *Quoniam dociles imitandis
Turpibus ac Pravis omnes sumus.*————

Having thus occasionally given you a transient View of the Complexion and Sentiments of our Modern Politicians here, touching revealed Religion, and some of their religious Exercises; I return now to pursue more closely that which I first propos'd should be the chief Subject-matter of this Letter.

I have already, by several demonstrative Proofs, and undeniable Instances of Points of Fact, shewed you (*Vide Pag. 6. & sequentes*) that, under the Colour and false Pretence of serving the Queen's Interest, and encreasing the publick Revenues of the Crown, the Male-Practices of Mr. R—by, his Confederates, Abettors, and Tools, have been so grossly fraudulent and oppressive, to the manifest Prejudice of both the Queen and the Subject, that, in the Escheating of Estates (whether justly Escheatable or not) as aforesaid, the private Composition given to the Governor (beside what these Escheat-Brokers have got to themselves) has, oftner than once, amounted to near about 300 times as much as the pretended trifling Value brought of such Escheated Estate to the Queen's Account.

And

And lest these our Politicians should still nevertheless pretend, that if, upon legal Inquisition, the Jurors may have, thro' Ignorance or otherwise, given ground to suspect them guilty of Perjury, in their having valued Estates, escheatable to the Queen, at such unaccountable Under-rates, as left Room for the Escheat-Patentees to have made some Presents to the Governor, what was that to them, (the said *R—by*, &c. pretty innocent Lambs?) I'll give you now some Instances of the like male-Practices in the Escheating and Undervaluing other Estates, upon account whereof the Governor had no Share of the Profits, but merely the Satisfaction of gratifying his Favourites, and so has let these (*pervices*) have the whole Benefit of such Escheats as were granted to themselves, whether in their own, or in borrow'd Names; as for example:

Upon some pretended Defect in the Right and Title of one — *Jenkins*, an old blind Man, to a small Estate honestly purchas'd by him, and then in his Possession, and upon which he and his Family lived very comfortably, near *Dry-River* in the Parish of *Clarendon*; Dr. *John Stuart* took out a Writ of Escheat against him; the Jury, upon Inquisition, valued that Estate to the Queen, if I remember right, at no more than 12 Shillings and 6 Pence: The Doctor obtain'd a Patent thereof *gratis* to himself, and the honest blind Man was sent a begging, to live upon the Charity of well-disposed Persons. However this Proceeding against the blind Object, who was not able to help himself, rais'd such a general Clamour among all Degrees of People in the Island, that I am told, (how truly I cannot say) our pious and worthy State-Doctor was, through a strange Fit of Compassion and Charity, (Qualities not very legible in his Complexion or other Actions) prevail'd with thereafter, to give some small Pittance towards keeping this poor blind Man from starving.

It would be somewhat too presumptuous in me, to assign the Causes either of God's Mercies or Judgments; and therefore I'll not adventure so far as to suggest, that it is as a just Judgment on a certain *Scotch-Irish*, or *Irish-Scotch* Mongrel Doctor (born at or near *Colvaine* in *Ireland*, and bred sometime in the West of *Scotland*) for the Perverseness of his Ways, the Viciousness of his Morals, or the Wickedness of such flagrant Practices as are above narrated, he is, in congruity with the well-known Stupidity of his intellectual Faculties, very near being likewise affected with a bodily Blindness: But as it is generally allow'd, that, by the constant Gloominess of his Countenance, the Downwardness of his Looks, his grunting when he eats, &c. and the Coarseness of his Manners, in all respects whatsoever, he very much resembles a pretty neat cleanly Creature, (vulgarly called a Hog) I'll take the Liberty to put you in mind of an antient Observation and Tradition, handed down to us by one of the Poets:

Disortum vultum sequitur Disortio morum.

And *Seneca*, in his *Hercules Oetaeus*, observeth, that, *Licet ipse neget, vultus loquitur quodcunque negat*. Yea, *Ovid*, after he had in his own Person, and that of many others, multiplied his Observations on the Frailties of Human Nature, not to call them worse, has the following Exclamation in the 2^d Book of his *Metamorphoses* :

Hæu ! quam difficile est Crimen non prodere vultu !

So that if this busy, officious, and impudent, tho' ignorant Tool, had not been casually join'd in a Party, with some more subtle and cunning Sophisters, he'd soon crumble away into his original, a most abject and despicable Nothing.

Another Instance of one of these Favourite's obtaining the Grant of an elcheated Estate to himself, by Patent, under the Broad Seal of this Island, without any manner of Equivalent for the same, to the Governor, you have already set forth in the Person of that polite Gentleman, Mr. R—by (*Vide Pag. 7th.*) and the better to palliate and carry on his Project by Surprise, the Negroes, for which he obtain'd that Patent, in his own Favour, were, (as I am inform'd) cried out at the Grand Court, and elcheated in the Name (if I remember right) of one — *Delamain* ; tho, at that time, in the Possession of Mr. *James Whitechurch*, then in *England*.

By the like Trick (frequently used too on other Occasions here) of crying out, at the Grand-Court, in the Name of a Person dead many Years since, a Freehold of about 1000 Acres of very good Land, which old Captain *Jones*, then at *London*, has in the Parish of *St. Katherine*, he had very near been nickt out of it ; the same had instantly been affirmed by the Court to have been devolved on, and vested in the Crown, upon the account of Quit-Rents ; and a new Grant thereof executed in favour of one of our Triumvirate's Tools, to whom the same was previously promised ; if a Gentleman then by accident in Court, had not, merely by the Description and Bounding of the Land, discover'd it to be Captain *Jones's* ; and so prevented that designed Fraud.

Then, as to Mr. *Brodrick*, he, honest Gentleman ! would not (no, not for the World) take the Benefit of an Elcheat to himself : But, to oblige so near and useful a Relation, as his Reverend and Worthy Mother-in-law, Mrs. *Olivia Reid*, he carried on an Elcheat for her behoof thus : A Plantation consisting of 900 Acres of Land, by Survey, with the Appurtenances, situated in the Parish of *Westmorland*, late the Estate of Doctor *Hume*, a *Scotchman*, who died in this Island, without any Heirs that we hear of ; was, upon Inquisition, valued, by the Jury, to be worth to the Queen no more than 1 l. 17 s. 6 d. (To shew their pretended Exactness there must be always some odd Pence.) What the real Value thereof may be, I have not as yet learn'd ; but I am morally assured, by very good Hands, the Governor had no manner of Fee or Equivalent for the Elcheat-Patent which he gave of that Estate ; unless it be true (as some People

People do say) that Mrs. *Olivia* had sometime before presented him with a white Cow with Calf: however, be that as it will, I am inform'd there is one remarkable Circumstance that happen'd in the passing that Patent, which I must not omit letting you know, *viz.* After his Excellency had sign'd a Warrant, in common Form, directed to Mr. *Brodrick*, as Attorney-General, and to Mr. *Melling*, as Clerk of the Patents, for preparing a Patent to the said Mrs. *Olivia Reid*, and her Heirs for ever, of the 900 Acres of Land, and Appurtenances aforesaid; Mr. *Br—ck*, upon second Consideration, for Reasons best known to himself, dash'd *Olivia Reid's* Name out of the said sign'd Warrant, and, instead thereof, interlin'd the Name of *John Graves* (as may be seen by the said Warrant still extant in Mr. *Melling's* Office) and the Patent for the Premises was accordingly pass'd and executed in the Name of *John Graves*. Now, whether the said Escheat-Patent be really, and *bona fide*, for the proper Use and Behoof of honest Mr. *Brodrick*, or Mrs. *Olivia Reid*, or of the said *John Graves*, or in trust for both, or either of the former two, is to me as yet a Problem.

I find likewise that two small Plantations, containing jointly about 500 Acres of escheated Land, with their Appurtenances, situated, lying and being, in the Parishes of *Clarendon* and *Vere*, respectively valued, by the Jurors, upon Inquisition, to the Queen, the one at 19 Shillings and 7 Pence half-penny, and the other at 8 l. 16 s. 3 d. have been, in *August*, 1711. granted by two several Patents, under the Broad Seal of this Island, to Mr. *Br—k's* Country-man and humble Servant, *John Stafford*, of the Parish of *Vere*, Shop-keeper: That another small Plantation, containing about 20 Acres of escheated Land, with the Appurtenances, in the Parish of *St. Catherine*, valued to the Queen at 5 l. was by an Escheat-Patent, granted, in *July* last, to *Richard Stoddard*, Esq; one of the Learned Judges of our Grand Court, and his Heirs: And that 30 Feet square of escheated Foot-Land, with the Appurtenances thereunto belonging, (late the Estate of *Mary Gibson*, Widow) situated lying and being in the Town of *Port Royal*, was valued to the Queen at 9 l. and, by an Escheat-Patent, granted in *January* last, to *Robert Snead* of *Port Royal* aforesaid, Turner. But what particular Premiums or Brokerage (beside avowed Fees) may have been given to the G—r and the said Escheat-Brokers (*R—by*, *St—t*, *Br—ck*) in consideration of the said Escheat-Patents, with many others of the same nature, I must own he is wiser than I who can tell: For, as none are let into that Secret, but only themselves and their Customers, these Escheat-Patentees; so, few of these do ever disclose what such Patents truly cost them; except when the Parties chiefly aggrieved by that Practice, are forced to save their Bacon, as much as they can, by becoming thus, a second time, Purchasers of their own Estates, as in the Case of *Herring*, *Blake*, &c. formerly mention'd. (*Vide Page 8, & sequentes.*)

Yet, in the general, as it is demonstratively apparent, by what I have already written, that all these escheated Estates (whether justly escheatable or not) are, with a knavish Design, most scandalously

lously and perfidiously undervalued to the Queen, and that the Pretence of encreasing the publick Revenue, by this Eſcheating Trade, is but a meer Pretence indeed ; ſo, on the other hand, I aſſure you, it is (with abundance of Murmuring, Heart-burning, and Bitterneſs, and not without ſome Aſtoniſhment too) taken notice of, and daily reflected upon, That Three Perſons ſo lately come hither in ſuch indifferent Circumſtances ; *R—by* then a Shop-keeper's 2d Son, and (as I am credibly informed by Mr. *P—* and others) in diſgrace with his Father, remarkable by his old Green Silk Stockings, having neither Money nor Letters of Credit, and indebted for the ſtipulated Price of purchaſing his Patent, and even for the Money that defray'd the Charges of his Voyage, till Colonel *Lowe* generously lent him 50 l. *S—t*, without having ſo much as tolerably good Cloathing, or whole Shoes to his Feet, and determin'd, thro' Deſpair (as he told *C—l B—r* and others) to have gone and diſpoſed of himſelf among the *Spaniards*, till *H—d* took pity of him ; and *B—k* worſe than nothing, by ſeveral thouſands of Pounds, Bankrupt in Reputation as well as Credit, almoſt diſown'd (as I have been told) even by his own Family, and not having a whole Shirt to his Back, as indeed he has but very rarely a clean one as yet : It is (I ſay) remarkably wonder'd at, that ſuch as theſe ſhould ſo ſuddenly, not only jump into Chariots, driving all things *Jebu-like*, before them ; but that Two of them at leaſt, ſhould be likewiſe in a condition to be daily laying out almoſt incredible large Sums of Money at Intereſt, upon Mortgages, and making Remittances into *Europe*, to ſecure their Retreat thither, whenever they come to find this Iſland's juſt Indignation and Reſentment grow too hot for them. And, to deal ingenuouſly with you, their Insolence and Tyranny are now become ſo inſupportably great, that they have more than ſufficiently verified that old Obſervation and Maxim,

Aſperius nihil eſt humili cum furgit in altum.

Which I may adventure to tranſlate into a well-known *Engliſh* Proverb, thus : *Set a Beggar on Horſeback, and he'll ride to the Devil.*

I ſhould be far from thinking it a juſt Reproach to, or derogatory Reflection on theſe, or any other Gentlemen, that they were once poor ; provided they had not taken any ſiniſter, fraudulent, oppreſſive, or other over-haſty Meaſures to become rich. But ſince the wiſeſt of Men, *Solomon*, in the height of all his Glory, has throughout the whole Book of his excellent *Proverbs*, given us many notable Reflections on, and ſerious Cautions againſt all violent and haſty Courſes to become rich, as well as againſt the wicked Enticers of others to follow ſuch Courſes, I'll take the Liberty to put you in mind of ſome of them, on this occaſion. *Prov. i. 15. My Son, walk not thou in the way with them, refrain thy Foot from their Path.* And after having ſubjoin'd many particular Reaſons for that Advice, both in that and other ſubſequent Chapters, gives then this very expreſs and comprehensive one, Chap. xxviii. 20. *He that*

that maketh haste to be rich, shall not be innocent. And to convince us, that it is not a very difficult matter, even for Men of very ordinary Talents, to get Riches, especially if they will be so brutish as to lay aside the Principles and Rules of Equity and Justice, to obtain them; the same Wise Man tells us, *Prov. xx. 21. An Inheritance may be gotten hastily, at the beginning; but the End thereof shall not be blessed.* And to mortify the excessive Pride, Vanity and Folly of such as are too apt to value themselves, upon the account of their Riches, (which way soever obtain'd) or who arrogantly attribute their being successful in these, or any other worldly Acquisitions whatsoever, to the Excellency of their own conceited Parts, or extraordinary Skill, or personal Merit, he assures us farther, *Eccles. ix. 11. That the Race is not to the Swift, nor the Battle to the Strong, neither yet Bread to the Wise, nor yet Riches to Men of Understanding, nor yet Favour to Men of Skill; but Time and Chance hapneth to them all.* And as a Curse entail'd on such as set their Hearts on purchasing Riches at any rate, he tells us likewise, *Eccles. v. 10. He that loveth Silver shall not be satisfied with Silver, nor he that loveth Abundance with Increase.* And to their farther Mortification, *Prov. xi. 4. that Riches profit not in the Day of Wrath, &c.*

Yet nevertheless, as an insatiable thirsting after more and more still, in indefinitum, is one of the many Curses ever attending Wealth wickedly obtain'd; our Triumvirate have their Inventions always upon the stretch, and their Tools constantly imploy'd, in getting, increasing and multiplying Riches, by many more various and oppressive Ways, Means and Methods, than you can possibly imagine, at so great a distance; a particular Narrative whereof would fill several Volumes; And therefore (beside some few occasional Excursions, or rather Moral Reflections interspersed here and there) I'll confine my self, in this Letter, to the Discussion of what I apprehend may more immediately relate to the first Grounds and Occasion of the three several Acts of the Governor, Council and Assembly aforementioned; particularly the Elcheating Trade.

Our Triumvirate being puff'd up with their almost incredible Success in all their Attempts for gratifying (if possible) their Avarice and Ambition, were not (it seems) as yet contented with their having, by the aforesaid artful Perjuries and other Contrivances, eluded, as much as in them lay, the gracious Intention of her Majesty's above-recited Instruction (*Not to dispose of any Elcheat of above the Value of 10 l. Vide Pag. 7th.*) but took it likewise for granted, they had got such an absolute Ascendant over his Excellency, in all respects whatsoever, that they might prevail with him, one way or other, to have jump't over the aforesaid Instruction, for good and all: Because many Estates brought under the Denomination of Elcheats (how justly I will not say) are so very notoriously known to be of such considerable real Value, that to have had them respectively valued by Juries, within the Limitation of 10 l. each, at most, could not, under the colour of any Sham-Rule whatsoever, be easily projected. For, even by the lowest Rules of Computation, or rather Appreciation, commonly used
by

by our ordinary Elcheat-Juries here in *Jamaica*, some of these are valued to the Queen at 20 *l.* some at 30 *l.* some 40 *l.* some 50 *l.* some 100 *l.* some 200 *l.* and some much more. From all which Premises you may modestly conclude, that the real Value of these Estates so elcheated, and not as yet absolutely disposed of, will amount to some small matter more than the Value return'd by the Juries.

However, I am now to give you an Instance of our Triumvirate's Resolution to have made his Excellency break through Her Majesty's aforesaid Instructions intirely; if an Accident had not baulk'd their Design, at that time.

The Estate of *Mary Swintee*, of the Parish of *Port Royal*, deceased, being upon a Writ of Elcheat and Inquisition thereon taken in *August*, 1711. by a Jury, valued at 100 *l.* and adjudged by the Grand Court, held in *November* last, to be vested in Her Majesty; our Triumvirate, some time thereafter, represented to the Governor the great Worth and Merit of the Naval Officer here, *William Norris*, Esq; (one of their Favourites and thorough-pac'd Tools in the Assembly, the Admiralty-Court, and the Magistracy of *Port Royal*) and therefore intreated his Excellency would be pleased to grant him an Elcheat-Patent of the Premises, which his Excellency promised he would; but upon what Conditions I have not heard.

His Excellency having accordingly given Orders to his then Secretary, *Mr. Mackenzie*, to have drawn a Warrant to the Attorney-General and Clerk of the Patents, to have prepared an Elcheat-Patent of the Premises, to the said *William Norris* and his Heirs; the Note by which the said Warrant was to have been drawn, being very general, except as to the Butting and Bounding, and no mention being made therein (as usual in such Cases) of the Value returned by the Jury, &c. he went to the Clerk of the Grand Court's Office, where he found what he wanted.

Mr. Mackenzie thereupon deferred making out the said Warrant, till the Triumvirate and *Mr. Norris* complained severally to his Excellency; who thereupon reprimanded him, and gave him fresh Orders to dispatch it, as before: But he being determin'd in his own Mind, neither to write nor countersign a Warrant that would have been a manifest Violation of Her Majesty's particular Instruction above recited, dictated the said Warrant to his Clerk, inserting the Jury's Valuation of the said Estate, and then carried it, with some other Papers, to be sign'd by the Governor, who happening to be, at that time, alone, sign'd them all immediately, in course, as they were laid before him: Whereupon *Mr. Mackenzie* took that Opportunity (he very seldom having any such, as I have been frequently told) to say, He thought himself in Duty bound to expostulate a little with his Excellency, touching the Contents of the aforesaid Warrant; that as he apprehended it to be a manifest Infraction of the aforesaid Article of Her Majesty's Instructions to his Excellency (especially should a Patent pass thereon) he humbly desired to be excused, if he could not persuade himself to countersign it; lest peradventure he might afterwards happen to be blam'd for

for the Faults of some other People, who (he said, he was afraid) would very little regard who should be blam'd for their Advice, in that, or any thing else, provided they might, in the mean time, compass their own Ends; and that therefore he hoped his Excellency would, upon more mature Deliberation, resolve not to be prevail'd upon, by the artful Perswasions or deluding Practices of any Person or Persons whatsoever, to give away, or dispose of, any Escheat valued above 10 *l.* (and much less this one valued at 100 *l.*) without a special Allowance from Her Majesty, for so doing, &c. at which his Excellency colour'd extremely, without speaking one Word; read the said Warrant softly to himself; and then (after pawing, sometime, thereon) tore away his Subscription from it.

I had this Account lately from Mr. *Mackenzie's* own Mouth; and to confirm the Truth thereof, he let me see that very Warrant it self, which was on the 4th Day of *March* last, sign'd and cancell'd by his Excellency as aforesaid, whereby I observed that some Fragments of several Letters of his Excellency's Subscription were still visibly remaining. But what pass'd thereafter between his Excellency, the Triumvirate, and Mr. *Norris*, touching the Premises, Mr. *Mackenzie* could not inform me: However, before that Month was at an end, he was made sensible with a witness, that his Conduct in relation to the aforesaid Escheat, was added to the Black List of his other unpardonable Crimes against the Triumvirate; as Mr. *Norris* was to the Number of his avowed Enemies.

I will not anticipate the Vindication of all or any Part of Mr. *Mackenzie's* Behaviour and Conduct, since he came hither; he being, in every respect, very capable of doing it himself, and designing home very speedily, by the *Defiance* Man of War, if the Triumvirate suffer our Governor to sign his Ticket of Leave: Yet, nevertheless, I cannot forbear taking notice in the general, of the great Discouragements and most unjust Oppressions he has labour'd under, ever since he came hither, and particularly of his having been most arbitrarily imprison'd, for 28 Days time, upon a very false Accusation; and that tho', in compliance with the utmost Extremity required by the Laws and Customs of this Island, for obtaining Leave to go off, he gave in *August* last, 1000 *l.* Security into the Secretary's Office, for answering any Debts that he might be supposed to have contracted here (which I have good ground to believe are none at all) yet (notwithstanding thereof, and the many Solicitations and Importunities of several Gentlemen on his account) the Governor has not, to this Hour, sign'd his Ticket; nor is there any Appearance of his Willingness to sign it at all; tho' it be no more than what, by the Laws, he is obliged to do, of course. But, be that as it will, I believe Admiral *Walker*, Commadore *Littleton*, Captain *St. Lo*, and indeed all the Sea-Officers here, are so much Mr. *Mackenzie's* Friends, and so sensible of the base and oppressive Usage he has had from the Governor and his Triumvirate, in all respects whatever, that (under the Rose) he reckons upon having his Passage howsoever, on board the said Man of War, without any regard to his not having the

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Governor's Ticket; he having already done all that was incumbent on him to have done for obtaining it. And really the extraordinary Earnestness which the Triumvirate do shew for his being still detain'd here, *volens volens*, by hook or by crook, and their making ridiculous and notoriously false Resolves of Council, to be transmitted home, by way of anticipation, to his Prejudice, seems to me, and to all unbiass'd Persons here, to flow and proceed from a checking Consciousness of their own Demerits, and a Terror of his exposing them, in his just Resentment, whenever he gets safe again, out of their Clutches, into the Land of Liberty.

And, by the by, to make good the old *Latin* Proverb, *Solatium miseris multos habere pares*, I cannot but think it, in some sense, a Comfort to Mr. *Mackenzie*, (such as it is) That he is not the only one of all the Gentlemen who accompanied our present Governor, the Lord *Archibald Hamilton*, hither, that has been disappointed of his Excellency's promis'd Favour and Justice: For all and every one of them (whether Volunteers, Expectants, or actually Fee'd Servants) whom the Triumvirate, upon enquiring into their several Characters, Capacities and Circumstances, suspected of Understanding, Integrity and Courage enough to have, in their respective Spheres, detected, opposed and frustrated their (the said Triumvirate's) then intended Practices, were, in less than 14 Days time, after his Excellency's Arrival here, not only remov'd (and in some measure banish'd) from about his Person and Confidence; but likewise treated with Insolence and Contempt, and several of them used as if they were little better than mere scoundrel good-for-nothing Fellows.

The Gentlemen who have been thus disappointed are particularly, Mr. *David St. Clair*, a younger Son of my Lord *St. Clair* of *Scotland*; Mr. *Robert Paterson*, the younger Brother of Sir *Hugh Paterson*, Baronet, and very nearly related to the Governor; Mr. *Richard Dereham*, Brother of Sir *Thomas Dereham*, Baronet, (all three Volunteers severally recommended to the Governor's Favour and Patronage, by his Grace the Duke of *Hamilton*, and other Persons of Quality) Mr. *Robert Dowglas*, recommended to his Excellency by his Grace the Duke of *Roxburgh*; Mr. — *Elliot*, a young Gentleman, Heir to an Estate, recommended by Sir *Gilbert Elliot* of *Slobs*, Baronet, and Mr. *Baillie*, one of the Lords Commissioners for Trade; *Patrick St. Clair*, Doctor of Physick, and younger Son of Sir *Robert St. Clair*, Baronet; who, tho' he came over in the Quality of the Governor's Physician, with large Assurances of his Excellency's Favour, was, under the colour of a friendly, tho' peremptory Advice, commanded by the Governor, to go and live at *Port Royal*, a small Island, about 14 Miles distant from *Spanish Town*, the Seat of the Government, lest (as there was indeed just ground to suspect) his Practice should much interfere with that of Doctor *John St — t*, one of our beloved Triumvirate: And when, upon the Invitation of several Gentlemen of considerable Interest and Estates, Doctor *St. Clair* return'd again to *Spanish Town*, in about three Months time thereafter, and went to wait
upon

upon the Governor, to acquaint him thereof; his Excellency, in a very angry manner, disapprov'd of the Doctor's Return, and has not condescended so much as to speak to, or return him a Hat, ever since.

Lieutenant *John Mebeux*, who came hither a Volunteer with our present Governor, as being 'specially recommended to his Favour, both by the Duke and Dutchess of *Ormond* severally, is unprovided for, to this Hour; tho' his Excellency has, in the mean time, preferred several others, who never saw a Shot fired against an Enemy, to Commissions in *Hanadsyde's* Regiment.

Mr. Patrick Hamilton, late Sheriff of the City of *Cork* in *Ireland*, a very modest Gentleman of good Education, honourable and worthy Principles, of Experience in Trade, and of as fair a general Character for Probity, Honesty and Capacity (by a very solemn Certificate, sign'd by the whole Corporation, and under the common Seal of that City, in a Silver Box, with a suitable Inscription) as any Man that ever lived in it, happening to have had great Misfortunes, by Losses at Sea and otherways, during this War, came hither in the Quality of the Governor's Steward; and tho' he was earnestly recommended by the Duke of *Hamilton*, Sir *Alexander Cairns* and others, yet was suddenly dismiss'd quite out of his Excellency's Service; as were likewise *Mr. John Dupray*, a Confectioner, and *Gundimore*, a very good Cook, tho' both were upon stated Wages: But what Wages *Mr. Hamilton* was to have had, I forgot to enquire. This Account I had severally from the respective Persons above-named, and confirm'd by other Hands.

Upon the aforesaid Dismission, the said *Gundimore's* Wife fell sick, and broke her Heart, and died; and he himself, for want of a Ticket, signed by the Governor and *Mr. Rigby*, in common Form (which was positively refused, unless he could give 1000*l.* Security; and how could he, poor Man?) was forced to use Means to get off the Island, and return to *England*, by Stealth, about 13 Months since.

John Dupray fell desperately sick, upon his Disappointment; and was at the Point of Death, till his Country-man, *Mr. Lewis Galdy*, an eminent Merchant in *Port-Royal*, thro' Charity and Compassion, supplied him with all Necessaries; and, after Recovery, trusted him with a small Stock, to set up Shop with.

Mr. Patrick Hamilton lingered out some time, but could never digest the Shock which his aforesaid unexpected Dismission gave him; was struck into a kind of Despair, tho' he endeavour'd to conceal it; yet the Sense he had of his own Circumstances overcame his Spirits, at last; so fell sick and died.

Joseph Marshal, the Governor's *Valet d'Chambre*, being then likewise predetermin'd to have been dismiss'd; his Wife (who was of a passionate Temper) cry'd out, and roar'd against the Governor, fell sick, and soon died: And then, upon farther Consideration, for fear of disobliging the Earl of *Orkney* (whom, as I am told, the said *Marshal* had formerly served) he the said *Marshal* has been hitherto continued in the same Station; but upon such a precarious footing, and so frequently bated, that, I am told, he has lately apply'd to *Mr. T——ll*, &c. for other Service.

Thomas Mac-Mullen, who came hither, upon settled Wages, in the Quality of his Excellency's Groom, tho' he serv'd his time to a Barber, happening to marry a Barber's Widow, and praying to be discharged; was dismiss'd, upon Condition to quit his preceding Wages, which he accordingly did.

Mr. Robert Paterfon return'd home in December last.

Mr. Robert Dowglas return'd home in April last.

Mr. Gilbert Elliot, by waiting for the Governor's Ticket (which was refused, till he'd find 1000*l.* Security) miss'd his Passage, which he took on board the ——— Galley of *Bristol*, in October last; fell thereupon sick, and soon after died.

Mr. Richard Dereham (after having spent the small Stock of Money he brought along with him, and after having apply'd several times to the Governor and his Secretary, by Letters and otherwise, to put his Excellency in mind of him) was forced at last, through mere Necessity, to enter into very mean Service, somewhere up in the Mountains.

Then, as to *Mr. Mackenzie*, 'tis more than probable, he also had been dismiss'd with the rest, soon after his Arrival here, as an useless Charge, and, in every respect, incapable of informing or advising his Excellency, touching any thing relating to the Administration of the Government of this Island; because (as if the Change of Climates had deprived Men of the former Exercise of their rational Faculties) he was never here before; in case the Governor himself had not then (as I am credibly informed) acknowledged he was under such particular Engagements to him, that he could not well turn him off, so suddenly, without some Pretence or other against him: Whereupon the Triumvirate's Project ever after, was to manage Matters so, that he should, under the Mask of a pretended Friendship, be kept constantly employ'd in Affairs, which could yield him little or no Credit, Reputation or Profit; and yet might afford them (according to their distorted Insinuations) some seeming Pretence of whispering into the Governor's Ear, such Suggestions and indirect Reproaches, as might tend to lessen his Excellency's Opinion of the Usefulness of the said *Mackenzie's* Service; that he the said *Mackenzie* should never be allowed to be in Company with the Governor, on any Occasion, but when some or all of themselves were constantly present; and then, by degrees, to pick German Quarrels with him, and put his Excellency upon extorting and exacting at last such extravagant arbitrary Shares of his ordinary Fees from him, as no Gentleman, having any competent Measure of Spirit and Capacity, could ever bear with; especially considering the Governor's Express and repeated Engagements to the contrary, both by Word and Writing (as *Mr. Mackenzie* assures me) before he was prevail'd upon to accompany his Excellency hither: And, in Confirmation of what goes before, *Mr. Mackenzie* saith likewise, that since his Arrival here, he never was, to this Hour, allowed to lie one Night in the same House with his Excellency; nor to accompany him, on any one Progress into the Country; nor to ride any of his Horses, nor

to use his Chariot or Chaise, on any Occasion whatsoever; tho' too notoriously common to others of much meaner Characters, particularly to a certain Cook-Maid, who pretended to command the same at Pleasure, and also to her chief Gossip, a certain Tavern-keeper, who (tho' never married) has had several Bastard Children to as many different Fathers.

But really one of the most singular and shocking Instances of a vitiated and depraved Nature, as well as a perverse and inhuman Inclination, towards poor Mr. Mackenzie (who, on many Considerations, might very reasonably have expected some other sort of Treatment) was this: That when, upon the Death of his Son (a very comely and ingenious Youth) on the 6th Day of November last, at Night, my Lord St. Clair's Son above-named, went very obligingly (at Mr. Mackenzie's Request, and in his Name) the next Morning, to acquaint our Governor thereof; to make an Apology for Mr. Mackenzie's necessary Absence that Day; and to invite his Excellency to the Funeral; his Excellency, instead of condescending to do the poor afflicted Gentleman the Courtesy and Honour of coming, in the Cool of the Evening, so far as 200 Paces, to the said Funeral (from which Mr. Rigby, he being then with his Excellency, openly dissuaded him) was moreover so void of the Bowels of Christian Charity and Compassion, on that Occasion, that (soon after Mr. St. Clair's Return) two successive Messages were sent, by a Footman, to Mr. Mackenzie, requiring his immediate Attendance on the Governor; with peremptory Orders to bring along with him all the Commissions for Colonel Lowe's Militia-Regiment of Foot (which were mostly, if not all, of the said deceased Youth's hand-writing) with soft Sealing-wax, cut Papers for the Seals, &c. This was such a surprizing and pinching Dilemma to the said Mackenzie, at such a Juncture, that, by Means thereof, he must unavoidably have subjected himself either to the seeming, tho' unjust Censure of contemning and not obeying his Excellency's Commands, if he went not instantly to wait on him; or to the Obloquy and more just Reproach of being thought very unnatural, in case he had then gone, to have busied himself about the finishing Commissions that he knew required no manner of haste, (and which, by the by, were not deliver'd out, in a Month's time, after they were finish'd) when he should have been employ'd in doing the last Christian as well as Parental Duty to his Son; which not only the Ties of Nature, but even common Decency requir'd at his Hands, and could in no Respect have admitted of any Delay, in this so warm a Climate: Whereupon (to prevent the sinister Design which he suspected, of misconstruing any verbal Answer he could have given, on that Occasion) he sent his Excellency a grave Apologetick Answer in writing; a Copy whereof I have seen. Yet nevertheless when, on the next subsequent Day, after the Funeral (which was, in every Respect, very decently performed; all the Gentlemen of the Council and Assembly, then in Town, except the Governor and Mr. Rigby, having been present at it, beside many others) Mr. Mac-

kenzie went, in suitable Mourning, to wait on his Excellency (with whom Mr. *Rigby* was, at that time, likewise) neither the one, nor the other, thought fit to take the least notice, directly, or indirectly, of the Occasion of his the said *Mackenzie's* being then in such Mourning, any more than if they had never heard any thing of the Matter: But, with a very supercilious Air, order'd him to finish the aforesaid Commissions forthwith.

I must own the whole Course of their Behaviour on this Occasion, seem'd to me to have carried along with it, such an unparalleled Indication of propense Malice, and most barbarous Inhumanity, as even the bloodiest Warriours and Conquerors that ever lived, would so far have scorn'd to have been guilty of, that they seldom or never refused to their vanquish'd Foes, a Cessation of Arms, when demanded, for burying of their Dead. Good God! That Persons professing themselves Christians, should thus deliberately shew so little Regard to the unavoidable Concern, which common Decency, as well as Nature, requires from a Parent, on so surprizing an Occasion! Whereas the much more religious and compassionate Heathen could so feelingly exclaim against any such supposed Inhumanity, thus:

*Quis Matrem nisi mentis inops, in funere nati,
Flere vetat? —————*

Who, but a Tyrant-Monster, would forbid
A Parent's Mourning, o'er a Son, when Dead? }
Or on his Hearse some parting Tears to shed? }

The Consideration of such base and unexpected vile Usage, as poor *Mackenzie* then met with; the Sense he had of his other grievous Disappointments, in the general; together with the sudden Death of his Son, who was not above three Days sick; and his want of sleep, on that Occasion; made such a deep Impression on his Spirits, as threw him into a dangerous Fever, which had very near cost him his Life. And yet, ALL THAT was but a Prologue to the uninterrupted Series and Concatenation of the many studied Arts of arbitrary Violence and unaccountable Oppressions, under which he has, with incredible Patience and Fortitude, labour'd ever since.

I had almost forgot to acquaint you, that as there is seldom or never any General without an Exception, so among those that accompanied his Excellency hither, there happen'd to be one, and but one, Babe of Grace (Mr. *William Cockburn*, the younger Son of one of the Judges in Scotland) who having managed Matters so, that he dared not adventure to shew his Head any longer in England, Scotland, Holland, Hamburg, &c, for fear of being clapt close into *Lymbo*, made his Escape hither, as being one of the last Resorts of Persons so slated. Our Trumvirate soon understood what Use to make of such a Tool, whenever Occasion offer'd; and, without doubt, ply'd him accordingly: For tho' he gave him-

himself the Air of joining with others, in condemning and crying out exceedingly against their Conduct and Influence, during the first 8 or 9 Months, after his Arrival here ; yet he no sooner had a View of succeeding to Mr. *Mackenzie*, as Secretary to his Excellency, and Clerk of the Council, than he changed his Note, and render'd himself meritorious with the said Triumvirate, and their Pupil, by giving himself openly the Lye, as to his formerly profess'd Sentiments concerning them, and by informing falsely, and even perjuringly, against some of those, to whose Friendship he was most obliged, while he remain'd here in a State of Peregrination, before his Advancement to Mr. *Mackenzie's* Office.

Mr. *St. Clair* intends to go for *England*, by the *Defiance* Man of War ; and is able to give a more particular Account of his own and Mr. *Mackenzie's* Treatment, since they came hither.

To all discerning and unbiass'd Persons here, it looks like Infatuation, that a Gentleman born of a noble Family, and vested with the Deputation of a sovereign Power, should so far depreciate his own Quality, and prostitute the Dignity and Credit of that Commission which he has the Honour to bear, as, on the one hand, to admit such a notorious Composition of Ignorance and Impudence, as that grunting Mongrel Animal, our Hog-Do——r (tho' a busy officious Tool) to be, on all Occasions whatsoever, whether publick or private, one of his Ex——cy's most familiar and favourite Companions ; especially when here are Gentlemen of liberal Education, opulent Fortunes, and honourable Principles, among whom he might easily have made a much better Choice ; and, on the other hand, suffer himself to have been so very insensibly at first sight, and ever since implicitly captivated, ensnar'd, and deluded, by the fawning and sycophantick Addresses, the smooth artificial Smiles, the fustian designing Flatteries, the close and parasitical Attendance, the servile and indefatigable seeming Obsequiousness, the frothy, obscene and profane Witticisms, the many false Insinuations, and malicious Suggestions, the artful, crafty, and most injurious Contrivances, and with the fallacious, equivocal, gawdy, and affected Oratory of so over fashionable a Demi-Foreigner, and so grossly disingenuous a Sophister, as our *Machiavel Junior*, (the said Mr. *R——by*) whose Character may bear at least some faint Resemblance to that which was given of *Cinna*, one of the Roman Consuls, *That he had a Head to contrive, a Tongue to persuade, and a Heart to perpetrate* (and, for ought I know, a Hand also to execute) any *Mischief whatsoever, to gratifie an insatiable Avarice, Ambition, Lust, or Revenge.*

And then, as to our *Corpus Juris*, *Brodrick*, (the Third Member of our governing Triumvirate) the odiousness of his scandalous Character is so very well known in *England*, *Ireland*, *Montserrat*, and this unhappy Island, that I need not trouble you now with any Description of those heterogeneous Parts which compose the same.

Yet still, whenever it happens so, that, thro' the want of either sufficient Penetration and Judgment to discern, Capacity to answer and resist, or Courage to slight the plausibility of such sophistical Arguments, as are advanced under the false Colour (tho' specious Pretences) of serving their Interest, aggrandizing their Powers and Fortunes, and of administering to their Pleasures; Persons in highest Authority suffer themselves to be thus surpriz'd, into a more than ordinary Familiarity with designing Sycophants, they seldom or never escape being sooth'd into an ease and agreeable, tho' fatal Belief, That all the charming Adulations, and fulsome Encomiums of these crafty Parasites are a Tribute really due to some singular (how imperceptible soever) Merit in themselves; according to that of *Juvenal*:

———— *Nihil est quod credere de se
Non possit, cum laudatur Diis aqua Potestas.*

And being thus, by the pleasing Enchantment and Delusion of that false Munch, once plunged into such a deep Lethargy, as shuts up all the Avenues to their Reason; few ever recover such a true Sense and Taste of Persons and Things again, as to take warning from that notable Confession and Admonition of *Ovid*, in the 3d Book of his *Elegies*:

*Desine Blanditias, & verba potentia quondam
Perdere; non ego sum Stultus ut ante fui.*

Which I have adventur'd to render into *English*, thus:

Forbear your Fawning; Flatter me no more;
I am not now the Fool I was before.

And, among the many wise Observations of *Solomon*, on the innumerable Mischiefs wrought by Lying and Flattery, he gives the following express Caution, against a dissembling Flatterer, *Prov.* 26. 25. *When he speaketh fair, believe him not; for there are seven Abominations in his Heart.* And, *Ver.* 28. *A lying Tongue hateth those that are afflicted by it, and a flattering Mouth worketh Ruin.* And, without doubt, God comprehended such as these in that Curse which he denounc'd by the Mouth of the Prophet *Isaiah*, *ch.* 5. 20. *Wo unto them that call Evil Good, and Good Evil; that put Darknes for Light, and Light for Darknes; that put Bitter for Sweet, and Sweet for Bitter.* And, a little after, *ver.* 23. *Who justifieth the Wicked for Reward, and take away the Righteousness of the Righteous from him.*

It was the saying of a late ingenious Author, That the Inhabitants of a City or Province, whose Governor is himself govern'd by others, must of all People be the most miserable: Alluding, no doubt, in some respect, to that of the Wiseman, *Ecc.* 10. 16. *Wo to thee, O Land, when thy King is a Child,* (that is, a Person

not

not capable of discerning or distinguishing Good from Evil, Right from Wrong, Truth from Falshood, Vice from Virtue, or how to decree Justice and Judgment, &c.) And in Confirmation thereof, God complaining of the general defection and perverseness of his People, threatens to punish them by the Mouth of his Prophet *Isaiah*, ch. 3. 4, 5. *And I will give them Children to be their Princes, and Babes shall rule over them. And the People shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his Neighbour : The Child shall behave himself proudly against the Ancient, and the base against the honourable. And then, ver. 12. As for my People, Children are their Oppressors, and Women rule over them.* Now if the Governor of a Province or Colony, happen to be a Person not endowed with such Qualifications as are necessary for good Government, but must himself be implicitly directed by others ; then how much more miserable must the Case of that Province or Colony be, when these others are no way accountable for such Governor's Male-Administration ; and when that Province happens to be so far distant from the Imperial Seat and Fountain of Government, that the Remedy of going thither to sue for Redress, may probably prove worse (if worse can be) than the Disease it self.

I shall ever pay a due regard to the Memory of that gallant and worthy Gentleman, Major General *Selwyn*, who, upon his first Arrival here, Anno 1701. in the Quality of Captain General, and Governor of this Island, being continually teased with the officious Advices, Whisperings, and Insinuations of Two very crafty and designing Persons, (Colonel *H——ry L——we*, and Colonel *R——d Ll——d*) touching the Constitution of the Island, the Characters, Humours, and Inclinations of certain particular Persons, &c. with the view of screwing themselves into his Favour, so as to become his chief Confidants and Tutors ; heard them out, very patiently, for several Days ; and then, at last, express'd himself to them in Words to the following Effect : *Gentlemen, I have given you a full hearing ; I thank you for your Advice ; I'll observe so much of it as I think convenient ; I can easily see what you drive at ; but I would have you take notice, that I came not hither with a slabbering Bibb, and leading Strings : Yet, Gentlemen, if you please to compromise the Matter, You (Mr. L——we) shall govern for one Month, and you (Mr. Ll——d) shall govern another Month ; but, depend upon it, I shall govern, my self, all the Time after, during my stay here.* This was so obvious a Rebuke for their petulant officiousness, that neither they, nor any other, pretended to direct him ever after ; except, when he thought fit to ask their Opinions or Advice in Matters under deliberation at the Time. He was a Gentleman of a very goodly Presence, of bright natural Parts, and very good acquired Endowments ; an excellent Soldier ; impartial in the Administration of Justice ; frugal without Parsimony, and generous without Prodigality. In short, God did not think us worthy of being long blessed with such a Governor ; for he died before the end of that Year.

After

After so long a Digression, it is high Time now to return to the Discussion of what I first propos'd should be the chief subject Matter of this Letter.

I have already given you several Instances of the vile Practices of our Escheat-brokers, in the escheating of Estates, whether really escheatable or not: And have still, in store, many more Instances of such to give; but will confine myself, at this Time, to only one Instance more, which, for the singularity of some Circumstances attending it, deserves your special Consideration.

By an Act of the Governor, Council, and Assembly of this Island, and confirmed in Council at *Whitehall*, by King *Charles II.* Intituled, *An Act for encouraging the settling of this Island*, It was Enacted, *That any Alien then settled, or that thereafter should settle in this Island, and take the Oath of Allegiance, should, to all Intents and Purposes, be fully and compleatly Naturalized; paying only 5l. 10 s. for a proper Instrument purporting the same, under the Broad Seal of this Island.*

Upon the Encouragement of the aforesaid Act, an indefinite Number of *Jews*, and some other Foreigners of different Nations, and Religions, came and settled here; purchas'd Freeholds, &c. and amongst the rest, one *William Kupius*, a Native of *Holland*, settled, and was Naturalized here; and purchas'd a considerable Plantation, with a suitable Number of Negroes, in the Parish of *Clarendon*; married the Daughter of Colonel *Bernard Andreas*, in the Neighbourhood; and had by her, one Son, and one Daughter.

Upon the Death of the said *William Kupius*, some Years since, and of his said only Son some Time after; the aforesaid Plantation, Negroes, and other Appurtenances, fell of course to his then only surviving Child, *Anna-Williamina-Bernarda Kupius*, an Infant.

The said Infant being under the Guardianship of the said Colonel *Andreas*, her Grand-father; and her Mother (the Daughter of the said Colonel *Andreas*, and Widow of the said *William Kupius*,) happening to intermarry with Mr. *Anthony Swimmer*, the said Colonel *Andreas* (as Guardian aforesaid) did let the said Infant's Estate (*viz.* the said Plantation and Negroes) in Farm, to the said *Anthony Swimmer*, at 300 *l.* yearly Rent, during the time of her (the said Infant's) Minority. But, both the said Grandfather, and Mother of the said Infant, happening to die soon after; she, the said Infant, was then left under the Guardianship, and to the sole Care of her Step-Grand-Mother, or Grand-Mother in Law, the Widow and Executrix of the said Colonel *Andreas*.

By this time, our Escheat-Brokers began to prick up their Ears, and had not even Discretion enough to conceal their Wishes and Hopes, that the said Infant *Anna-Williamina-Bernarda Kupius* (who was then aged about 8 or 9 Years) might likewise go soon the way of all Flesh: Because in such Case, these voracious Vultures did not doubt of getting their Talons fasten'd upon her aforesaid Estate, for want of Heirs.

Now comes on the Mystery of Iniquity :

The said Infant happening to be somewhat troubled with a little Tumour or Swelling in her Groin, one Mr. *Newsam*, a neighbouring Chyrurgeon, was thereupon consulted, and took her in hand, to cure her : But before he had time to take proper and necessary Measures for that End, her said Grand-Mother-in-Law was, by the Mediation and Letters of Advice (as I am credibly inform'd) of a certain useful Matron (one of *Æsculapius's* Setters) prevail'd upon to bring the said Child forthwith up from the *Leeward* to *Spanish Town*, to be put under the immediate Care of Dr. *John Stewart*, as the only Doctor in the Island, who could infallibly cure her, of all Distempers whatsoever, if curable, &c.

Sooth'd thus with the pleasing Allurements aforesaid, the honest well meaning Grand-Mother (Mrs. *Andreas*) settled and left her Grand-Daughter (the Infant above-named) at Mr. *Merick's* House in *Spanish-Town*, where she remain'd about a Year, under our infallible Doctor's (I had almost said, Butcher's) Hands.

He began his tender Experiments, by making a large Incision, which (after some few Dressings, *Secundum Artem*) he said, was a *Fistula* : This was succeeded by several other large Incisions, round the said Infant's Thigh, very near, if not quite into the Bone ; and to give some seeming Colour (as was then generally thought) to such an extraordinary and violent Piece of Practice, he call'd a certain Under-Practitioner to his Assistance, for Dressing, in his own Absence, those Wounds or *Fistula's*, which he himself had, with so much Tendernefs, thus made. In short, after he had kept the aforesaid Infant (who was not then above 9 Years of Age) in a continued Torment, with repeated Incisions, Issues, Applications, Counter-applications, and the D——l and the Doctor knows what besides, for about the Space of one whole Year, and was, from time to time, very liberally paid by the Grand-Mother, Mrs. *Andreas* ; he told her at last, *That the said Infant was incurable ; that he had done all he could to her ; and that he would not give himself any farther Trouble about her ; or to that Purpose* : Whereupon, Mrs. *Andreas* took the said Infant home to *Leeward*, and sent for one Dr. *Page*, under whose Care (notwithstanding the unaccountable Butchery aforesaid) the Child recovered apace, for 4 or 5 Months together, and was likely to have done very well ; 'till in his Absence, she contracted a Cold, which threw her into a violent Flux and Fever, of which she dy'd before he could reach her.

It is needless here to trouble you with a Recital of the many Reflections past upon Dr. *Stewart's* Method of Practice above-mention'd ; and how He and some other certain Doctors had very high Words upon it, at *Sarah Turner's* Tavern, in *Spanish Town*.

But, by the bye, I must own, I am the less scrupulous in believing him very capable of committing such a design'd piece of barbarous Inhumanity (if prompted thereto either by Malice, Revenge, or the view of private Interest) when I consider after what Manner he has treated several others ; and particularly for

Instance, Mr. *Mackenzie*, (the Governor's late Secretary aforesaid) soon after his Arrival here ; which was thus,

Mr. *Mackenzie* happening, one Day after Dinner, to say (in discoursing transiently on general Heads) That the Musketo-Flies had been very busie about his Legs, the Night before ; and that, between sleeping and waking, he had ruffled a little of the Skin of his left Leg, somewhat above the Ankle-bone ; Dr. *Stewart* would needs thereupon come officiously next Morning (as he did without Invitation) to see Mr. *Mackenzie's* Leg, under the pretence of Friendship, and to bring with him (as he said) a little Ointment, to draw a new Skin upon it ; but instead thereof, bringing a Stiletto ready drawn (that is, a Lancet hid in the Palm of his Hand) and taking hold of *Mackenzie's* Leg, then turning his back round, and placing himself in such manner as rendred it impossible for his Patient to see what the Doctor was going about to do to his Leg ; and *Mackenzie* supposing that the badness of the Doctor's Sight made him probably chuse that Posture, to bring the Object the nearer to his purblind Eye ; the Doctor all of a sudden, without the other's previous Knowledge, or Consent in the least, and holding still *Mackenzie's* Leg fast lock'd under his Arm, made 5 or 6 slight Incisions cross one another, about the Ankle-bone, at which he being very much surprized, cry'd out in a great Passion to the Doctor, what, in the Name of G——d, he meant by so doing ? To which the Doctor answered very gravely, *It was only to make the Blood start, for preventing the Stagnation thereof ;* tho' there was not the least shadow of any ground imaginable for supposing, and much less dreading any such Thing. Then the Doctor calling forward his *Myrmidon*, who was ready at hand, with a large Gallipot, full of some sulphureous, liquid stuff, bathed *Mackenzie's* Leg with the same, which made it instantly smart so extremely, that to alleviate the Pain thereof, and to cool the fiery Heat which the said bathing had occasion'd, the Doctor then bedawb'd and plaister'd it, all over, with a thick Ointment which his *Myrmidon* had ready in another Gallipot for the purpose ; and so wrapp'd the Ankle quite round with a Plaister and linnen Bandage, and charg'd the said *Mackenzie* not to untie it, before next Morning, upon any account whatsoever, and leaving the said Gallipots with him, told him his Ankle (tho' it should smart a little) must be bath'd and dress'd once more therewith, in manner aforesaid ; and that thereafter he would apply something, which, he doubted not, would in a short time, perfectly heal it.

After Dr. *Stewart's* Departure, Mr. *Mackenzie* became, by Degrees, so very sensible of a continued growing Heat, and extraordinary gnawing Pain, in and about his Ankle, that he could hardly contain himself from pulling off the Plaister and Bandage ; but, with much ado, he kept it on, according to the Doctor's Directions, till next Morning ; at which time Dr. *Blair* happening to make him a friendly Visit, from *Kingslon*, was surpriz'd to see him confin'd to his Chamber, with a sore Leg ; and enquiring into the Cause thereof, and being informed of all that Dr. *Stewart* had

had done to it, soon discover'd (after undressing it) that the Practice was in every Step thereof, the Effect of premeditated Malice and Villany; and that nothing but a very strong Corrosive could have made such a Cavity in one Night's time, as appear'd then in Mr. *Mackenzie's* Leg; and therefore in Colonel *Blair's* Presence, avowedly discharged Mr. *Mackenzie* (as his Friend) from making any farther Use of these Applications prescribed by Dr. *Stewart*; from which time forward Mr. *Mackenzie* never, to this Hour, could, with any Patience, hear of taking any of Dr. *Stewart's* Prescriptions, in any Case whatsoever; nor, indeed, any other Person that has a just Notion of the Man, or a due Regard to his own Safety.

Yea, our very Females (many of whom were formerly this our *Æsculapius's* Partizans and Setters) are of late become so sensible of the Grossness and Falsity of those innumerable Stories which he had, from time to time, impos'd upon their Credulity; of his sticking at nothing to compass his Ends; and of the Danger of trusting him, in any respect whatever; that the Generality of them (especially these of the better sort) have already quite dropt him, in so much that, at this time, he has not (as I am credibly informed) three Patients in all this Island; and therefore gives himself the Air of saying now, that since he has got an Estate to live on, at his Ease, he'll not give himself the Trouble of practising Physick any longer.

But, as to the Point in hand, the said Infant, *Anna-Williamina-Bernarda Kupius*, happening to die as aforesaid, in *January* last, at Mrs. *Andreas's* House; and Mrs. *Andreas* having thereupon sent an Express to Dr. *Stewart* (as being one of the Favourite-Triumvirate) with an Account thereof, and desiring his Mediation and Assistance, for obtaining her a Grant of the Elcheat of her said Grandchild's Estate, if escheatable; the Doctor (as I am informed) return'd for Answer, that she was too late, &c.

Several Gentlemen in the Parishes of *Clarendon, Vere*, and *St. Elizabeth*, were likewise desirous to become Purchasers of the said Estate, if escheatable; and signify'd their Willingness to have given, some four, some 5000 *l.* and upwards for the Grant thereof; beside — &c. But the common Report goes, that Mr. *Pennent*, one of the Assistant-Judges of the Grand Court, sent some *Spanish* Arguments *per* Express, to secure the Governor's and our Triumvirate's Favour, for letting him have the Refusal of the aforesaid Estate, at the Current Value in such Cases.

Whatever may be in that, I know not: But certain it is, that Mr. *Pennent* play'd his Cards so well, with these Elcheat-Brokers (the Triumvirate above-named, of whom Mr. *R——by* is the Chief) that no other Pretender is now admitted into Play; tho' 'tis more than probable, that some other Person, no way concern'd with these Brokers, might readily give better Conditions to the Governor, if he were not in a State of Pupillarity, under the absolute Direction and Management of these Elcheat-Leaches.

Mr. Pennent having taken out a Writ of Escheat in common Form, directed to the Provost-Marshal; Care was taken to summon such a Jury of 12 honest Men of the Neighbourhood, upon the Inquisition, as return'd, upon Oath, the Value of the said *Kupius's* Estate, at no more than 1456 *l.* to the Queen; tho' it be well known, that Mr. *Swymmer* pays 300 *l.* a Year for the same: And as it cannot be reasonably supposed, that the Deceased Colonel *Andreas*, late Guardian to the said Deceased Infant, would have been too precise and severe in letting a Lease of his said Pupil's Estate, to his own Son-in-Law (the said Mr. *Swymmer*) at too high a Rent; it is generally said, that Mr. *Swymmer* has made another good Estate out of the said *Kupius's* Estate, in the Compass of some few Years last past; and farther, the said *Kupius's* Estate produces (as I am informed) about 120 Hogsheds of very good Sugar a Year: which being modestly computed at 20 *l.* per Hoghead, makes 2400 *l.* a Year. Out of which the ordinary Charges being deducted, it must be allowed that the Remainder will much exceed the 300 *l.* yearly Rent payable for the same, as aforesaid. But beside the Plantation, Sugar-work and Houses, &c. belonging to it, there are (as I am informed) about 120 Negroes upon it; which Negroes being moderately valued at 25 *l.* per Head, will instantly yield 3000 *l.* What the remaining Personal Estate, beside the running yearly Rent, may amount to, I cannot tell: But, by what is already said, you may easily perceive there is some small Matter of Difference between the real Value of the said *Kupius's* Estate to the Possessor or Purchaser, and the sworn estimated Value thereof to the Queen; a Difference (tho' not proportionably quite so very ridiculous as some of the other Instances of less Value already mentioned, which are as 300 to 1) yet so grossly wide and scandalously shameful, that 'tis hard to tell where such perjurious and fraudulent Practices may end; if some timely stop be not put to this growing and horrid Evil.

The only Obstacle in our Triumvirate's way, at present, is, Her Majesty's aforesaid Instruction, *Limiting the Governor from disposing of any Fine, Forfeiture, or Escheat, above the Value of 10 l. without special Leave, &c.* This sticks so close in their Stomachs, that, sometimes, they cannot forbear even openly cursing the Commissioners of Trade, who prepared the Draught of that Instruction, as being a great Hindrance (they say) to the Dispatch of Business, &c. And the aforesaid Limitation disturbs their righteous Spirits, still the more; because it gives all real or pretended Heirs the longer time, for putting in their Claims to any escheated Estates, after the Escheat-Patents are past; which, if not done within the Space of three Years, their Pretensions are ever after foreclosed.

However, as our Triumvirate take all Occasions to magnify and extol our Governor's great Power and Interest at home; they assure their Escheat-Clients, that his Excellency makes not the least Doubt of prevailing with Her Majesty, to revoke the aforesaid Limitation; and give him a Discretionary Power, in relation to all Escheats whatsoever; or at least to give him the Grant or Disposal of such particular Escheats as he'll think fit to ask.

Now whether the said *Kupius's* Estate be justly escheatable; for want of Heirs, is, with many People, still a Question, because they seem to be pretty well assured, that the said *William Kupius* deceased (Father of the aforesaid Infant likewise deceased) had several Brothers, Sisters, and other near Relations, lately (and for ought they know, still) living in *Holland*. So that if such nearest Relations or Heirs be duly and timely apprized of the common Practice of this Island, with respect to the Right of Naturalization, they may easily obtain the Benefit of being naturalized, either here, or in *England*; and so have a clear Right to the said Estate of Course; in case they make their Claim within the Space of three Years, as above.

If it should be pretended that the afore-recited Act of this Island, for naturalizing Foreigners, is expired; I humbly apprehend that to be a Mistake: For tho' King *Charles II.* confirmed it, among several other Laws, for no longer time, than 21 Years, from the 1st of *November*, 1683; yet that Act being in its own Nature perpetual, for encouraging the Settling of this Island, it remains still in Force here; till the same be especially declared void, and disallowed of by the Queen.

Yea, moreover, as all former Governors, since the Commencement of the said Act did; so the present Governor continues, to this Hour, as Occasion offers, to grant Patents of Naturalization, to all such Foreigners as come and settle in this Island, if they require the same, pursuant to the aforesaid Act. And, as a farther corroborating Evidence thereof, when some naturalized *Jews* died lately here, without naturalized Heirs, the Wives, or other nearest Relations of such deceased *Jews*, having made Interest by some of the Triumvirate, obtain'd, first of all, Patents of Naturalization, founded upon the aforesaid Act (to qualify them for obtaining Letters of Administration, &c.) and then got Letters of Administration, of Course: So that what is Sauce for a Goose is Sauce for a Gander, for, *Majus & Minus non differunt specie.*

But if it should still nevertheless be determin'd, that the aforesaid Act is void, even since the Expiration of the 21 Years above-mention'd, then all the Patents of Naturalization granted, since that time, both by the late and present Governor, would likewise be void of course; as having been unwarrantably granted: And so there would be more fine Work for our Escheat Hunters, contrary to all publick Faith, and the Design of peopling this Island.

So that if any such Heir to the said Infant *Kupius* appear, in due time, and Care be taken to apprise the Queen fully of his Case, it is probable (considering the inhuman Cruelty of those previous Steps taken to make the aforesaid Estate escheatable, and then the perjurious and fraudulent Measures taken after, to conceal the real Value thereof, from the Queen and her Ministry, when escheated, as aforesaid) Her Majesty may, from an equitable Regard to such Heir's natural Right, by Proximity of Blood, from the general Indulgence intended to all Foreigners whatsoever (even *Jews*) by the Laws and Customs of this Island, and from the singular Goodness of

Her

Her own Royal Disposition, be induced to dispense with the strictness of any accidental Right arising to the Crown, merely from the want of a bare formality ; that is, such Heir's not being Naturalized in the strictest Form, before, perhaps, he could be apprized of his having a natural Right to any such Estate.

Upon the whole Matter, I am fully perswaded, that the most effectual Remedy, for preventing, and frustrating for the future, the many wicked Designs, crafty Contrivances, manifest Perjuries, and grievous Oppressions, now practised, and artfully carried on, under the false Colour and Pretence of serving the Queen's Interest, by the escheating of Estates, in manner above narrated, would be, to obtain a special Order and Instruction from Her Majesty, to the Governor of this Island, for the Time being, That all Estates in this Island, escheated or to be escheated to the Queen, and not already granted, by Escheat-Patents, to particular Persons, shall (upon Notice given to the Inhabitants, by Proclamation, or otherwise) be exposed to Sale, by publick Outcry, in *St. Jago de la Vega*, commonly called *Spanish Town*, during the Sessions of the Grand Court ; and then and there, be Sold to the highest Bidder, complying with the ordinary Conditions of Sale, without respect of Persons ; and that all Sums of Money arising from such Sales, be paid into the Hands of her Majesty's Receiver General, for the Time being ; and be appropriated to the Support of the Government of this Her Majesty's Island, and the contingent Charges thereof ; and not (as at present, and for some Years past) be sunk into the private Pockets of such as make it their Business to abuse the Queen, and oppress Her Majesty's Subjects, by their vile, corrupt, and perjurious Practices above mention'd.

Should such an Instruction be obtained, it would, at once cure us of all our Grievances touching Escheats ; for it would, for the future, prevent our Triumvirat's making (as, to the great Reproach of the Inhabitants, they have hitherto made) a May-game of too many neighbouring Planters, by stirring them up one against the other, and involving them in vexatious Suits at Law, with the mean and precarious Views of getting cheap Bargains of each others Estates, if, by hook or by crook escheatable ; it would leave no room for the Provost-Marshal's packing of scandalous Juries of perjured Wretches, upon Inquisitions, to return upon their Oaths, sham Estimates of such escheatable Estates as fall under their Cognizance, by which they frequently make the pretended Value not to exceed the One, two, or three hundredth Part of the real Value thereof ; it would make all Freeholders equally zealous that all Estates truly Escheatable should be escheated, and disposed of to the best Advantage, for the publick Use of the Government ; because by such means there would be the less occasion to raise Taxes on their own Estates, for the contingent Charges of the Government ; and be likewise a means to keep up the Value of their Plantations, so as not to be depreciated, by reason of the present easy Purchase of escheated Estates.

But while a Triumvirate of such crafty, designing, and industrious Jugglers, as are before described, are (with the help of such a Machine as they have got into their Hands, and the assistance of some other fervile and mercenary Associates) still kept at the Helm here, and have Credit enough to be believed at home, to the prejudice of honest Men, who may not have the Opportunity or Advantage of so direct, easie, and free a Correspondence, I am afraid that the obtaining such an Instruction as is above humbly proposed, is a Thing more to be wish'd, than hop'd for, very suddenly.

And really, the same Consideration (I must own) makes me farther afraid, That even (the three first above recited Acts of this Island, which were made and calculated to abridge, in some measure, the exorbitant Power of the said Triumvirate, (*viz. An Act to prevent any one Person from holding Two, or more Offices of Profit in this Island: An Act for regulating Fees, &c. And an Act for the further quieting Men's Possessions, and preventing vexatious Suits at Law*) may not probably obtain the Royal Confirmation, so readily as were to be wish'd: Because by several Letters from London, we have Advice, long since, that Mr. *Rigby* (who by his Office, as Deputy-Secretary, is the only Person obliged to make authentick Copies of all Acts of this Island, and is paid for the same, and for these Three in particular) took care to contrive Matters so as the first two of them (made and sent home in June 1711, to be confirmed) wanted the necessary Solemnity of having the Broad Seal of this Island affixed to them; for the want whereof, these Acts are still laid aside, till other Office-Copies be sent home in due Form, under the aforesaid Seal, if not already sent.

Yet, in the mean Time, He (the said *Rigby*) took occasion to employ his own and his Friends utmost Art and Industry, to possess some in Authority at home (particularly Sir *Edward Northey*, the present Attorney General) with Prejudices against the said Acts, tho' more immediately against that one, touching the Multiplication of Offices in his own Person (*vide* Pag. 4.) and the better to obtain his End, by grossly misrepresenting both Persons and Things, and by not Stating the Case fairly, (a Trick he the said *R—by* seldom or never fails being guilty of, in any Case whatever) and by falsely suggesting that the aforesaid Act in Relation to Offices was calculated against the Royal Prerogative; he has already, by way of Anticipation, obtain'd the Opinion of the said Attorney-General, *That the Two Offices, of Provost-Marshal, and Secretary of this Island, are not incompatible, to be held and executed by one and the same Person, &c.* As if that were the Point in Debate. No, That was never, in the least, once deny'd or contraverted, by any of the Promoters of the said Act. But these Two Offices having never been executed by one and the same Person, before Mr. *Rigby's* Time; the Assembly had not occasion till then, to discover the great Inconveniences thereof. And Mr. *Rigby* having, by many fraudulent, over-dextrous, and oppressive Practices, made it manifest to them, and to all the Inhabitants in general, that it then was (and still might be) highly inconvenient, and of

pernicious Consequence to have these Offices (which in many Cases ought to be Checks upon one another) executed by one Person, especially a Person having otherwise such an accumulated and overgrown Power, and dangerous Influence on the Administration of the Government here, as the said *Rigby* then had, and still has, yet more and more.

And the Truth is, the Assembly wanted neither sufficient Ground nor Inclination to have declared him (the said *Rigby*) incapable of enjoying or executing any publick Office whatever in this Island, ever after; could they have expected the Governor's concurrence: But knowing the transcendent Power which He (the said *Rigby*) had got over the then, as well as the present Governor, they thought it adviseable to soften their Resentment, and be contented with obtaining some part of their Design, by the general Words of the said Act; rather than lose the whole, by bearing too hard on him, in express Terms at once.

Many Things not directly incompatible in the Eye of the Law, or in the strict Sense thereof, may yet nevertheless (as in the present Case) be very highly inconvenient, and injurious in their own Nature; for *summum Jus, summa Injuria*, is an old and true Maxim: And tho', from a dutiful Regard to the Queen's Majesty, the Promoters of the said Act did specially reserve the Royal Prerogative therein, yet they do still humbly hope that Her Gracious Majesty will never be induced to exert Her Prerogative in the utmost lawful Extent thereof, to the manifest Prejudice of Thousands of Her Subjects here, and who Trade hither: for the sake of a single Person so notoriously obnoxious as Mr. *Rigby* is.

As to the other Act sent home likewise in June 1711, without the Seal of the Island, viz. *The Act for regulating Exorbitant Fees, &c.* All I can say to it as yet, is, That, under the plausible Pretence of securing the Estates and Interests of such Orphans and Creditors as happen to be in *England*, from Time to Time, the same nimble Gentleman above-named has projected, and, in the last Session of this present worthy Assembly, carry'd on, and obtained the passing of an Act that entitles him to demand legally now, from all Administrators and Executors whatever, many of those Fees which he formerly exacted Arbitrarily, and which (I am informed) were partly the occasion of making the aforesaid Law, for regulating Fees, &c.

Then as to the abovemention'd Act pass'd in the first Session of this Assembly, in July 1711, entituled, *An Act for the further quieting Men's Possessions, and preventing vexatious Suits at Law.* Tho' Mr. *Rigby* appear'd, at first, most violently against the passing thereof; yet finding all the Gentlemen, both of the Council and Assembly, who have any considerable Freeholds in this Island, as well as the other Freeholders in general, very much bent on having it pass; and finding likewise, that upon examining and comparing the Draught thereof, it agreed verbatim with the Amendments made (as I am informed) by the late Attorney-General (Sir *James Mountague*) and approved of, by Her Majesty in Council, to an

Act

An Act of a former Assembly, bearing the same Title with this Act, and sent home to have been confirmed at that Time; he (the said *Rigby*) thought fit to acquiesce and agree to this Act at last; and that he may be the less suspected of acting another Part, behind the Curtain (which he seldom fails of doing on any such occasion) gives himself an Air of seeming now very zealous for its obtaining the Royal Assent: But, as we have too much Experience of this Polite Gentleman's *Machiavelian* Sincerity, to think that his Words should agree with his Designs, in a Case wherein he thinks his private Interest concern'd; I have good ground to believe and affirm to you, for a Truth, that (according to his usual under-hand Practices) he has already set all the Engines he can at work, and will leave no probable Means unessay'd, to prevent (if possible) or at least, obstruct and retard the Confirmation of the aforesaid Act, at home.

I must own, had Sir *James Mountague* (who is said to have made the aforesaid Amendments) been continued Her Majesty's Attorney General to this Time, I should incline to believe it more than probable, that he would have thought himself obliged in Honour, to have favour'd the passing of the aforesaid Act, as it now stands; That is, He would have given his Opinion frankly and readily for its obtaining the Royal Sanction; as being according to his own Amendments.

But I am afraid, that on the other hand (according to the proverbial Saying, *new Lords new Laws*) the present Attorney General (to whose Hands the aforesaid Act must come of course) will not think himself any way tyed up, by his Predecessor's Opinion; but do therein according to the apparent Weight of such new Arguments, as in the present Juncture of Affairs, may possibly be offer'd for, or against the reasonableness or unreasonableness of the aforesaid Act, as it was last pass'd here, and transmitted home. For which Reason, I wish the Gentlemen of this Island now residing in *England*, may take some care to apprise him fully of the real Grounds and Necessity of having such an Act; and give him to understand farther, that, if it should happen to meet with the misfortune of being return'd hither again, with any new Amendments whatever; other succeeding Attorney Generals may, in like manner, make farther Amendments to it, still in *indefinitum*; and that, by means thereof, an Act so absolutely necessary for the Peace, Quiet, and Welfare of this Island, may perhaps be lost, for good and all.

I once propos'd to my self to have made an end here: But being now inform'd that the Ships are not to sail as yet; I take occasion to acquaint you farther, that tho' this Island were fully redress'd in Relation to the Escheats and other Grievances aforementioned (which I humbly apprehend can never be) without stripping and divesting our tyrannizing Triumvirate of all their Power and Places here, at once) yet these are not the one hundredth Part of the many fraudulent and arbitrary Practices, by which the said Triumvirate, with the assistance of their servile Associates and Abettors, do daily abuse the Queen's gracious Goodness, and oppress Her Majesty's

jeſty's Subjects here : For, as in ſeveral Caſes, They make a handle of the Queen's pretended Intereſt to rob and defraud the People ; ſo, in ſeveral of the very ſame Caſes, theſe Jugglers make frequently a handle of the People's pretended Intereſt, to defraud Her Maſteſty of Her Juſt and Legal Right : As, for Example :

When, purſuant to the Act of Parliament of the 6th Year of the Queen's Reign, entitled, *An Act for the Encouragement of the Trade to America*, and purſuant to the Orders and Inſtructions of the Commiſſioners of Her Maſteſty's Customs thereupon, the Collector here (*Peter Beckford*, then Junior, Eſq;) was demanding, and had received ſome of the Duties payable by the ſaid Act, for all Prize-Goods, in manner therein required ; our projecting Politicians procured the then Governor's Order in Council (*non obſtante* the expreſs Words of the aforeſaid Act of Parliament, for preſent Payment) "*That the ſaid Collector ſhould take Security of all Prizes brought in, or to be brought in, That they would answer all ſuch Duties as ſhould be due by Law, when thereunto legally required : And that a Copy thereof ſhould be given to the ſaid Collector, &c.*"

Had I not been very well aſſured that the aforeſaid Order was drawn, written and ſign'd by that Polite, Ingenious, and moſt dextrous Gentleman, Mr. *Rigby* (as he was then Clerk of the Council here) I might poſſibly have inconfiderately adventured to comment a little on the artful looſeneſs of the Draught, and ſeeming Deſign thereof ; but his own ſubſequent Conduct, ever ſince, in relation to the Subject matter of that Order, has ſav'd me that trouble, and ſufficiently explain'd the honeſty of his Meaning, and ſincerity of his Intention by it.

Tho' the ſaid Collector (*Mr. Beckford*) has had the Advantage of a generous and liberal Education, at the Univerſity and Inns of Court ; is unqueſtionably well affected to the preſent Conſtitution, both in Church and State ; and is (as you very well know) not only a Native of this Iſland, but Proprietor of one of the moſt conſiderable Eſtates, if not the greateſt in it (which muſt be allowed to be ſome Security for the ſincerity of his Inclinations to promote its Intereſt) and tho' his endeavouring, on all occaſions (eſpecially when he was Speaker of ſome former Aſſemblies) to have ſtemm'd, as much as in him lay, the then growing Tide of the apparent Deſigns of our projecting and indefatigable Triumvirate, was a ſufficient manifeſtation of his Zeal for the Peace, Quiet, Welfare and Proſperity of the Planters in general : Yet when, in the diſcharge of his Duty to the Queen, he endeavour'd, purſuant to the Act of Parliament and Inſtructions aforeſaid, to have collected the Duties, legally due and payable to Her Maſteſty, on all Prize-Goods then brought in hither, our projecting Politicians (whoſe Buſineſs, for the moſt Part, is to fiſh in troubled Waters) ſoon found out a Way, by traducing the ſaid Collector, as an alledged Enemy to the common Intereſt of this Iſland, and by ſuggeſting other ridiculous Prejudices againſt the Nature of his Office, to raiſe a Poſſe of poor deluded mobbiſh Privateers, to threaten, inſult, and bully him, or at leaſt his Deputy, from putting the ſaid Law duly in Execution : Which tumultuary

Proceeding, together with the Governor's Order aforesaid, compell'd the said Collector to sit down contented with getting only Bonds, for the payment of those Duties, from the several Agents of the Captors of the said respective Prizes ; with such Securities as they could, or thought fit to give for the same.

Here it is to be observed, that, by a general Combination between the aforesaid Agents and Bond-Projectors, whenever they were to give Bonds for the aforesaid Prize-Duties, they always pretended to be in such extreme hurry, in fitting out the said Captors again to Sea, or the like, that they could not possibly spare Time then, to settle and adjust the exact and particular Sums which the aforesaid Prize-Duties amounted to, and for which they were to give Bonds : But, in a Braggadochio-manner, to prevent the least suspicion of any sinister Design in them (honest Gentlemen !) would needs force upon the Collector or his Deputy, Bonds containing Penalties amounting to perhaps Five, Ten, or Fifteen Times as much as was, or could have been reasonably demanded of them : So that upon adjusting and comparing the Sums really due for the aforesaid Prize Duties, and unsatisfied, the first of June 1711, (since which Time the Prize Duties ceased) with the Penalties of the Bonds granted for the same ; the Penalties amounted to 54830 *l.* whereas the Duties or real Sums for which these Bonds were granted, amounted only to 9043 *l.*

Now to unriddle the mysterious Iniquity of this Janus-like Bond-Project, it will be necessary to shew you, how our Politicians have made it cut, like a two edged Sword, both forward and backward, and effectually to answer, ever since, all the various sinister Ends proposed by it.

Whenever any of the said Captors demanded a fair Distribution to be made of the Produce of the several Prizes wherein they were concern'd, so as they might receive their respective Shares thereof, their Agents had always one general Answer ready coin'd, and in Store for them, *viz.* " That, in regard the said Collector had " compelled them (as they alledged) to give Bonds and Security " to the Queen, for the full Value (if not more than the Value) " of what the said Prizes might amount to ; it could not be reasonably expected, they should part with any of the aforesaid " Price Goods, or the Produce thereof, while those heavy Bonds " lay over their Heads, and while they were at a continued Expence, upon account of Law Charges, and for soliciting to get " the said Bonds remitted, and made void by Act of Parliament, " &c. or to such Effect.

Then, *vice versa*, under the plausible Colour of a most tender and compassionate regard to the pretended Case of the said Captors, our Triumvirate-Projectors procur'd Addresses from the Governor, Council, and Assembly, by means whereof, together with the joint Endeavours of their Associates and Abettors, a Parliamentary Injunction was obtain'd, to put a stop to all Proceedings on the aforesaid Bonds, till the end of the next ensuing Session of Parliament.

So that, by thus artfully magnifying the Queen's Claim against the Captors, on the one Hand, and by setting up the Captor's pretended Interest, against the Queen's Right, with the other Hand, these Rooks (the aforesaid Agents and their juggling Triumvirate, Confederates and Abettors) have, all this Time, kept the above mentioned Sum of 54830 *l.* among them; or, at least, the Produce of all the aforesaid Prize Goods; which, instead of being less, may (for ought I know, and more probably too) have amounted to more than the double of that Sum, all which is laid out (as I am credibly informed) partly on Mortgages, at 10 *l.* *per Cent.* (the common Interest here) and partly on Trade, &c. from the consideration whereof, you may easily perceive, That 'tis no wonder if a Hook thus doubly baited should catch Fish; or that a Number of Persons thus combining together, and laying aside all Principles of Humanity and Justice, for compassing their worldly Ends, should soon obtain a more than ordinary Portion of the *Mammon of Unrighteousness*.

Many of the aforesaid poor Captors being, in the mean Time, dead, or removed into other Parts, and such of them as remain still living here, being thus quite tired out, and brought into Despair of ever recovering their Rights, have, at last, thro' the mere necessity of their Circumstances, compounded their several and respective shares of the aforesaid Prizes, with their said Agents, and some few others concerned with them, for little or nothing.

Whereupon a grievous Complaint was, on the 11th of October, 1711. made to our then sitting Assembly (the same that is still continued by several Prorogations) and the Consideration thereof was, with a very formal Air, referred to a Committee: But Mr. Brodrick (one of the said Triumvirate) being Speaker, and the Majority of the Members being Tools to him and his Associates, the Subject matter of the aforesaid Complaint was flurr'd over in silence, without ever taking any the least further Cognizance thereof, to this Hour.

From all which, you may reasonably conclude, that tho' the Parliament should now be induced to remit the said Bonds, it is not probable that the poor Captors can ever reap any Benefit thereby; unless the Parliament should, in their great Wisdom, Compassion and Justice, think fit, at the same Time, to interpolate their Authority so far, as to take care that a special Commission be sent to dis-interested Persons here, for enquiring into the great Abuses aforesaid, and for re-instating such of the said Captors as are living, (and the Executors and Administrators of such of them as are dead) in *statu quo*; without any regard to the aforesaid Compositions; and allowing them Interest likewise for the Time that their Money is detain'd by the said Agents: Which would be a very considerable Relief to the poor Captors; and the Queen's just Right, as to the aforesaid Duties, may nevertheless be still reserv'd. Thus would these Rooks be caught in the Net which they spread for the Feet of others.

— *Neque enim Lex justior ulla est,
Quam Necis Artifices arte perire suâ.*

But that which I am further surprized at, touching this Affair, is to have it positively affirmed, from several Hands, that, for inducing the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Customs, to make a favourable Report to the Honourable House of Commons, for remitting the aforesaid Bonds, &c. our late Governor *Handasyde*, Colonel *Richard Lloyd*, Mr. *Charles Kent*, Mr. *Richard Thompson*, Mr. *Edward James*, and Mr. *James Knight*, late Inhabitants of this Island, should deliberately adventure upon exposing themselves so far, as to give in such a formal Certificate under their Hands, to the said Commissioners, relating to the aforesaid Bonds, and to the Case and Circumstances of the respective Persons thereby bound, as they could not (or, at least refused to) make Oath, to the Truth thereof, when thereunto required by the said Commissioners, pursuant to the Directions of the Act of Parliament, enjoining that all Examinations and Proofs in that Matter, should be taken upon Oath.

Had these Gentlemen been ever, any way, noted as scrupulous Non-jurors, on all former Occasions, or been professed Quakers at the time, there might be some charitable Room left for extenuating the Imputation of that gross Disingenuity, which such a Proceeding seems to have fixed upon them: But since neither the one, nor the other, can be pretended, it is plain, they gave in that Certificate, with a premeditated Design, to have thereby imposed, on the said Commissioners, in the first Place, and then on the Parliament, of course; without ever supposing that they would be put to the Test of swearing to the Truth of what they had then certified as aforesaid.

'Tis true, the Law does not take hold of Persons, for barely saying or certifying a Falshood under their Hands, as it does for Perjury: But, in my humble Opinion, they are equally punishable, *in foro Conscientiæ*; when done knowingly, & *animo injuriandi*. Yet, we too frequently, see, that, tho' to avoid a temporal Punishment, some People will not so readily venture upon doing the one, they'll not always scruple much to do the other, when they think it may serve a particular Turn, for advancing their own or their Friend's Interest.

From my having thus expatiated so fully on the subject Matter of Escheats, Prize-Duties, Multiplication of Offices in one Man's Power, &c. you may possibly imagine, that the most considerable Grievances of this Island, and the Oppressions we lie under, are generally comprehended under these few Heads. No! I assure you, not the one hundredth Part of them: For, were I to launch out into that boundless Ocean of Corruption, the Proceedings in our chief Courts of Judicature (*viz.* the High Court of Chancery, the Grand Court, the Court of Admiralty, and the Council, which together with our Governour makes, you know, a Court of Appeals here.) I could easily give you such flaming Instances of arbitrary, illegal,

illegal, violent, unjust, oppressive and most scandalously corrupt Practices (and that chiefly too by the notorious Influence of our dearly beloved Triumvirate) in the Distribution of what is here called Justice, that any serious, intelligent, and indifferent Observer (if such a one could be here found) would be apt to conclude that, in this Climate, Virtue was to pass for Vice, and Vice for Virtue; and that Right and Wrong had made a mutual Exchange of their respective Qualities and Properties.

To go to Law here, is, in effect, the same as to try who has the heaviest Purse, and who can part with his Money most freely: For most commonly, if the Cause be pretty considerable, 'tis ten to one, but that he who fees best, may come best speed, according to that of Solomon, Prov. 19. 4. *Wealth maketh many Friends*, and ver. 6. *Every Man is a Friend to him that giveth Gifts*. And Chap. 17. 23. *A wicked Man taketh a Gift out of the Bosom* (that is, secretly) *to pervert the Ways of Judgment*, never regarding what goes before; ver. 25. *He that justifieth the Wicked, and he that condemneth the Just, even they both are Abomination to the Lord*.

But our Judges have this to plead, in their own Justification, That it is not to be expected they should judge and determine Law-Suits, according to the common Rules of Law and Equity, since none of them was ever bred to the Knowledge of the Laws. As for Example: Tho' Chancery-Suits are very frequent, and industriously swell'd up, to a prodigious Bulk here, of late Years; yet, this Island never having had any other Chancellor, than the Governor, for the time being; and our late Governor's Education having been generally confin'd to the Exercise of Pike and Musket; it need not be much wonder'd at, if he understood (without Inspiration) little more of the Office of a Lord Chancellor, and the deciding of abstruse and knotty Law-Cases, than he did of what he commonly (by Mistake) call'd the Creed of St. Ignatius; meaning that of St. Athanasius: To which, he said, he could not be easily reconciled.

And our present Chancellor (that is, our Governor) having been always bred at Sea, from a Youth upward, even before the Revolution; and never employ'd or conversant in any other Business, before he came hither; I cannot well apprehend how the bare Pre-eminence of a superior Birth, should entitle him to a more inspired Knowledge of the Laws, than the former.

Our present Chief-Justice, and chief Judge of the Grand-Court, (that is, the Courts of Queen's Bench, Common Pleas, and Exchequer, all in one) was likewise bred at Sea, from a Boy upward, and happening to get the Command of a Frigate, had the good or bad Luck (I can't tell which) to lose her, on a Rock, in sight of *Port Royal*, without any Stress of Weather: So, not thinking it convenient to return home, settled here, and became first a Planter, and then a Judge.

The next in course, is honest Judge *Careless*: He was a Soldier in one of the Regiments of Foot-Guards, at *White-hall*; and his Captain, willing to save himself the Trouble of paying his Company's weekly

weekly Subsistence-Money, entrusted this same *W——m C——less* to do it for him : But Mr. *C——less* aiming (it seems) at greater Matters, than carrying a Musket, borrow'd one Week's Subsistence of the Company, drew his own Pass, and made the best of his way hither, *insalutato Hospite*. Some say he sold himself to the Master of the Ship in which he was transported, to be a Servant for a certain Term of Years ; but under Redemption. However, be that as it will, he married a Planter's Widow, and is now the first of the Six Assistant-Judges of the Grand-Court. But nevertheless he still retains so much of his former Integrity, that if a Colt or Steer happen to straggle out of a Neighbouring Penn, he very charitably receives it into his own ; and to prevent its straggling farther, claps on his own Mark upon it.

All the other Assistant-Judges are likewise Planters of indifferent Estates, and have no Salaries. So that, upon the whole Matter, while the absolute Power of nominating, appointing, continuing, discontinuing and changing, these Judges, at Pleasure, remains in the Gov——r for the time being, and while a Triumvirate of such Persons as *R——by*, *Br——ck*, and *St——t*, or any two, or one of them, stand instead of an Oracle to such a Gov——r, touching all Matters relating both to Law and Gospel (as they do now, and have done for some Years past) I dare venture to assure you, that very few (if any) will be made or continued Judges, merely from the Consideration of the Brightness of their Qualifications, or Integrity of their Characters, in other Respects ; and consequently that none but their own Creatures, Dependents and Associates can well reckon upon being tolerably secure, either as to the Liberty of their Persons, or Property of their Estates, under such a precarious and corrupt Administration, as we now labour under.

I shall now conclude this long Letter with the Recital of a Story, which I cannot forbear mentioning to you, because of the Shrewdness of the Allusion.

News arriving here, some time since, from *Barbadoes*, that heavy Complaints were sent home, against Mr. *Lo——r*, the present Governor of that Island, for some alledg'd arbitrary Proceedings in the Administration of his Government there ; and that, as to Mr. *Do——s*, the Governor of the Windward Islands, he was (as they phras'd it) playing the De——l upon two Sticks ; fining, imprisoning, compounding, &c. at Pleasure ; especially in *Annegoa*, under the Colour of enquiring into the Manner and Occasion of the murdering his Predecessor, Colonel *Parks* ; insomuch that some reported he had made 20, some 40 or 50 (God knows how many) Thousands of Pounds, since he came thither ; and that there was a grievous Complaint sent home against him, &c. Which piece of News (whether true in Fact or not, I know not) being publickly told or repeated at our Governor's Table ; Mr. *R——by* (our Prolocutor as well as Dictator General) without taking any further notice of the aforesaid News, was pleas'd, after some few affected Smiles and Grins, to entertain his Excellency, and some few others, then

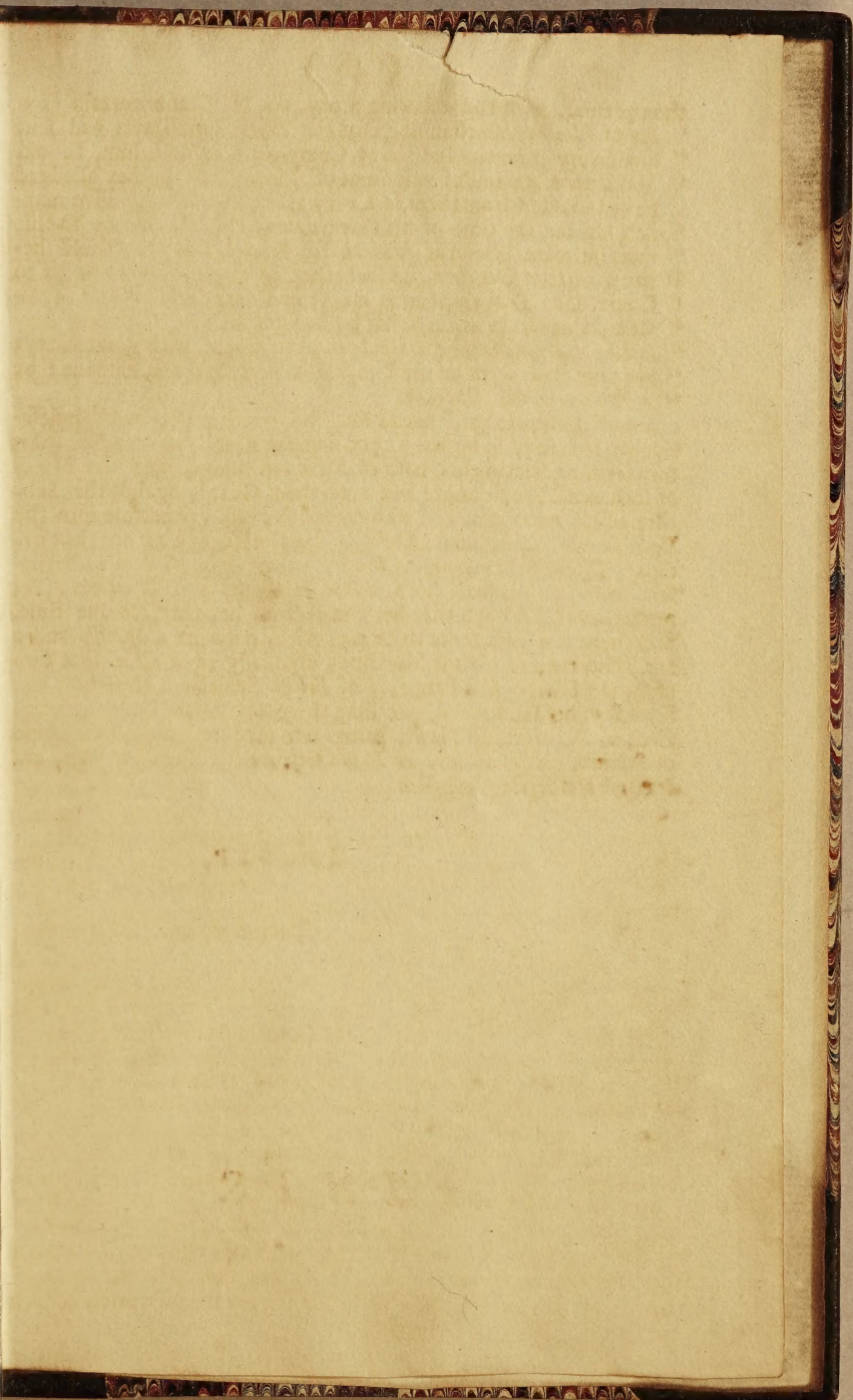
then present, with the following Story, viz. " That a certain *Vice-Roy of Mexico* understanding that the chief Inhabitants had sent home very grievous and heavy Complaints against him, to old *Spain*, upon account of vast Sums of Money, which they alledged he had exacted from them, in a very arbitrary and oppressive manner, during the time of his Government, &c. he wrote to his most intimate Friend at *Madrid*, for Advice how he should behave, on that Occasion, and whether he might venture to go to Court, &c. That thereupon his Friend sent him Word, if the Complaint was true, and that he had got all the Treasure they said he had got, he might freely come to Court, with great Safety; but that otherways he must expect to be ruin'd and undone: or in Words to that Purpose.

I must acknowledge, that as Mr. R——by is a Person of indefatigable Industry, so he has a very singular Faculty of inculcating his own seeming Sentiments, both of Men and things, into the Minds of such weak People as are not upon their Guard, against the Subtilty of his Attempts, and who cannot so readily penetrate into the Perniciousness of his double Designs: He has likewise a more than ordinary Talent in bringing his Votaries to be upon a Level with himself, as to the Looseness both of his Principles and Practices: Yet nevertheless still hope that he, and such as he, may, in due time, find there is a Difference to be met with, between a *Spanish* and a truly uncorrupted *British* Ministry; especially in a Case that concerns the Liberty and Property of *British* Subjects. However, the Slyness of his Insinuation, in telling this Story immediately upon the Back of the aforesaid News, brings into my Mind that Observation of *Solomon*, Prov. 18. 16. *A Man's Gift maketh Room for him, and bringeth him before great Men.*

I am, S I R,

Your most humble Servant,

F I N I S.



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